

**AN ETHNOGRAPHIC INVESTIGATION
INTO THE TEACHING OF WRITING
IN AN AFRICAN SECONDARY SCHOOL
IN THE PIETERMARITZBURG AREA**

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study is an ethnographic investigation into the teaching of writing in an African secondary school in the Pietermaritzburg area. It arose out of my awareness that schooling distributes literacy unequally and negatively affects learners' abilities to participate effectively in society. This inequality of access is prevalent in South African schools in the aftermath of apartheid education policy. The purpose of the research is to explore these issues of access and to gain an understanding of the factors that shape learners' knowledge, skills and attitudes around writing.

The need to gain a rich understanding of these factors indicated that a long-term, in-depth ethnographic study was appropriate. Accordingly I taught grade eleven classes at a school for two and a half years to understand the context in which teachers and learners operated. The core of the data came from Literate Life Histories that I collected by means of interviews with six learners. This was triangulated with data from interviews with teachers, classroom observation, analysis of syllabuses, teacher guides and examinations, participant observation of matriculation examinations, and analysis of student work.

The data shows that inappropriate teaching, assessment and texts deprives learners of access to effective literacy. Systemic constraints of syllabuses, teacher guides and large classes shape teachers' practices. As a result, learners experience a narrow range of genres, no explicit teaching or assessment around genre conventions, and inaccessible texts. Learners thus view writing as a grammar exercise, have little confidence in their ability to communicate via writing, do not see writing as a process of refinement, and have little knowledge of how genre, tenor, field and mode shape written texts. These findings point to the need for the rehabilitation of writing in the schools and teacher training. This will require attention to syllabuses, assessment practices and the adequate supply of appropriate textbooks.

PREFACE

The research described in this thesis was carried out in secondary school in the Pietermaritzburg area from 1993-1996 and in 1998 and 1999. The research was supervised by Professor K. Harley and Dr J. Clarence-Fincham.

This study represents original work by the author and has not otherwise been submitted in any form for any degree or diploma to any university. Where use has been made of other research it is duly acknowledged in the text.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

A statement by Martin (1989) that one could ascertain who had power in a society by finding out who had access to powerful written genres is what first sparked my interest in investigating the teaching and learning of writing in South African schools. He was referring to research he and Rothery did in Australian schools where they found that access to written genres was unequally distributed across the school population (*cited in* Martin 1989: 53-54). Those whose 'voices' were closest to the 'literate culture of power in an industrial society' (Cope and Kalantzis 1993a:7) were those with the cultural capital to gain control of powerful genres, such as exposition, without explicit teaching. However, they found that many children, such as working class, Aboriginal, and immigrant children, were not gaining access to these genres because they were not explicitly taught. They argued that access to genres gives students the potential to "join new realms of social activity and social power" (*ibid*) and that to deny this to children was effectively to cut them off from access to, and participation in, society. They concluded that the teaching practices they encountered transmitted important writing skills selectively to a few advantaged middle-class children (Martin 1989: 53-54).

1.1 Research Methodology

This research seemed to mirror the situation I was encountering with many Black first year university students coming from the different school education systems, and indicated a need to investigate the teaching and learning of writing in schools. These students were coming out of the school system with vastly different degrees of control over, and experience of, the written genres that were crucial to their success at university and in the world of work. As I was also involved in the training of language teachers it seemed crucial to develop an understanding of the content and teaching practice of schools as far as writing was concerned. Exposure to the work of Shirley Brice Heath (1983) suggested that an ethnographic investigation into this issue was the most appropriate method to adopt. This necessitates long-term, in-depth involvement in, and study of, a particular context (Watson-Gegeo 1988). As I was wanting to try and understand all the factors that impact on students' writing development, it seemed necessary to set up a

situation which would enable me to gain in-depth, first hand knowledge of a school and the micro- and macro-contexts that impact on the learning and teaching or writing in that school. These would include the many factors which impacted on the teaching of writing in a school and its outcomes, such as: the constraints education system in which the teaching took place; the community in which a school is situated; the teachers' training; the physical conditions in a school; class sizes; and the provision of exercise and text books.

Watson-Gegeo (1988) warns against 'blitzkrieg' (576) ethnography where the researcher 'dive-bombs' into a setting, makes a few superficial and impressionistic observations, and then leaves to write up the results. She states the aims of ethnographic research in the following terms:

To accomplish the goal of providing a descriptive and interpretive-explanatory account of people's behaviour in a given setting, the ethnographer carries out systematic, intensive, detailed observation of that behavior - examining how behavior and interaction are socially organized - and the social rules, interactional expectations, and cultural values underlying behavior (Ibid: 577).

These considerations, together with a concern not to be perceived as getting a degree at others' expense, led me to a decision in 1993 to teach a standard nine class in a school in community X in the Pietermaritzburg area. I felt this would enable me to establish my bona fides with both teachers and pupils as well as give me an in-depth understanding of the context in which teachers and students were working and learning. I would be seen more as a contributing member of the school community and less like an interloper concerned only with my own research interests. I chose to teach a standard nine class for two important reasons. Firstly, I felt that they were the products of at least eleven years of schooling and would be able to reflect on a long experience of schooling. Furthermore, they would in essence be the final products of that schooling context and would thus reflect the attitudes, approaches and skills inculcated by it. The second reason for this choice of class, instead of a final year matriculation class, was that they would not be immersed in preparation for the matriculation examinations. This would allow for more flexibility in teaching, and less pressure on both my time and the students' time. Consultations with teachers that I knew in the school indicated that matriculation students would not tolerate anything that they did not perceive to be contributing directly to their success in the final examinations.

1.2 Research Aims and Questions

The research investigates the teaching of writing in the school for the reasons mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. The aim of the research is to gain an understanding of what has shaped the teaching of writing in this school and how this has impacted on the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the learners. While each school is a research site with specific dynamics and contextual constraints, I hope that this research will contribute in some way to a deeper understanding of what is happening in our schools as far as the development of effective literate skills and attributes is concerned. I hope also that it contributes to debate around responses to the many problems that beset our school system in this area to the detriment of our learners.

In order to investigate the teaching of writing and its outcomes in the school, the following guiding research questions were formulated:

- What genres are students exposed to in their high school career and what teaching processes are employed to help them gain control over these genres?
- How much writing are students expected to do in the high school and what is the nature of the writing that they do?
- How do students approach different writing tasks and what does this indicate about their knowledge of, attitudes to, and perceptions of writing?
- What criteria are used in the assessment of writing and what messages do they send to students about the nature and process of writing?
- How do teachers respond to students' writing and what messages does this give to the students about writing?
- What are teachers' perceptions of, and attitudes towards writing and the teaching of writing and where do these come from?
- What are students' attitudes to, and perceptions of, writing and what factors give rise to these attitudes and perceptions?
- What messages does the matriculation examination send to both students and teachers about writing in terms of what genres, assessment criteria, and writing processes are

important?

1.3 Research Site

There were a number of important reasons for choosing school X in community X. The school was within 15 minutes drive of both my home and the university. I was also already well known in both the school and community. I had been involved in cricket coaching there for a number of years and had thus got to know students, teachers and community people. I had also been first a chairperson, and then a committee member, in the National Education Union of South Africa (NEUSA), a non-racial teachers' union in the late 1980's and early 1990's, as well as a committee member of the local National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC) during the same period. As a result I was frequently involved with teachers and community leaders on teacher and education related matters. Indeed, a close friend who had worked in both those organizations was the senior History teacher at the school. I had also taught three staff members at the university and knew the principal personally. It thus proved relatively easy to approach the principal and make the necessary arrangements to teach at the school. I taught there in 1993, 1994 and half of 1995. Subsequent to that I have maintained ongoing contact with the school on a regular basis via schools visits to conduct interviews with pupils and staff, observe lessons, take university students to gather data for assignments, collect data, and for informal, social visits.

The community in which the school is located is situated within the boundaries of the municipality of Pietermaritzburg. It is a geographically distinct community lying on a strip of land bounded by a stream and industrial area on the one side, and by a river, the municipal waste dump, and the sewerage works on the other. Originally it was one of the African townships established in terms of the 1923 Natives (Urban Areas) Act. Its history and development was thus governed and shaped by the racially-based laws and decisions that were part of the fabric of South African society since Union in 1910. The Apartheid years saw a typical pattern of strengthened segregation and underdevelopment. This sparked violent protest from the community in 1959 when the high school was burnt down, and ongoing protest and confrontation with authorities over rents and living conditions in the 1980's and early 1990's. The result of this history is that there has been ad hoc and uncoordinated development in the township, limited investment, instability, unstable administration and limited integration into the urban fabric of

Pietermaritzburg.

The community was also affected by the violent conflict between United Democratic Front (UDF) supporters and Inkatha in the 1980s and early 1990s. The school going children of this community were particularly affected (Gultig and Hart 1991). Shootings happened outside school grounds, teachers were threatened, and frequent school closures resulted.

The high school was established in 1949. It is an ex-Department of Education and Training (DET) administered school in what was designated a 'white' area, and thus has good basic provision of buildings and equipment. The buildings that were restored after the 1959 fires were subsequently further developed, the official opening of the modern extensions taking place in 1991. In 1993 there were 1076 pupils in the school in 26 class units with 32 teachers including the principal and deputy principal. Numbers have drooped to just under 800 pupils in 1999, and there have been substantial cuts in teaching staff to 21 through retrenchment and redeployment. This means that teachers carry heavy teaching loads, some of them dealing with over 250 pupils on a daily basis. In terms of resources the school provides a mixed picture. Many classes suffer from a shortage of textbooks. There are computer facilities and equipment in the science laboratory to conduct experiments, yet there is no provision for practical work in Biology.

While the school is relatively well resourced it is still subject to all the effects of poverty. The community surrounding it is poor, with high unemployment, low household income and education levels. Overcrowded homes, unhealthy living conditions and high levels of crime, especially in relation to drugs, affect pupils' attitudes to schooling particularly. Pupils show a high degree of apathy, manifested in high absenteeism, about school and school work. This attitude can be attributed to a combination of the poverty surrounding the school; the breakdown of a 'culture of learning' in the context of political instability and violence; and to the high levels of unemployment awaiting school leavers.

This brief description of the impetus and rationale for the research, the broad parameters of the research, and the context in which it took place, provide a backdrop for an overview of the chapters that will provide a framework for the research process and a description of it and the findings which emerge.

1.4 Outline of Chapters

The following provides a broad outline of the chapters to come.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 2 will survey the central readings that provided the theoretical framework and insights for the research and data analysis. Key readings will come from genre-based approaches (Martin 1989, 1993 a and b, Cope and Kalantzis 1993a and b, Macken and Slade 1993, Christie 1995, Macken-Horarik 1996) and their concerns with issues of equity and access to written genres. These readings, together with those of process approach protagonists (Coe 1986, Zamel 1985, Spack 1984) and critics of genre approaches (Kress 1993, The New London Group 1996), will provide insights into issues surrounding teaching methodology and assessment practices in schools. They will thus provide a means of understanding and assessing these issues in the research context of this investigation. Insights from the new literacy studies (Gee 1990, Street 1995, Maybin 1994, Prinsloo and Breier 1996), will also be discussed especially as they pertain to the interface between community and school literate practices (Bernstein 1990, 1996) and how they might explain attitudes to, and perceptions of, writing in the school and community being investigated. The insights from the literature will be used to develop criteria against which practices in the school can be evaluated. In addition they will be used to indicate the data that needs to be collected to investigate the issues identified in the readings.

Chapter 3: Research Methods.

This chapter will establish ethnographic research methods as appropriate to the research task. It will analyse and describe the nature of ethnographic research and demonstrate how the research processes undertaken attempted to fulfil the requirements of effective ethnographic research (Ericksen 1988, Spindler and Spindler 1987, Watson-Gegeo 1988). In particular it will discuss the collection of literate life histories as an appropriate method of ethnographic research

(Campbell 1988, Cleary 1991) . The chapter will explore issues related both to their use and to interviewing as a means of collecting life histories. The necessity of triangulation of data will be established. The different sources and methods used to collect data will be described together with a history of the unfolding research process.

Chapter 4: Findings.

This chapter will present the findings and analyse the data. It will describe and interpret the findings from students' literate life histories as the core method of data collection. These findings will be triangulated with data collected from different sources and by different methods. This would include the findings from interviews with teachers; participant observation of matriculation examinations; analysis of official documentation; observation of classes; and analysis of student writing. The findings from these different sources will be linked to related research in the South African context (Macdonald 1990, Langhan 1993, Taylor and Vinjevoold 1999).

Chapter 5. Conclusions and Implications.

The interpretation of the findings will lead to conclusions in relation to the issues and criteria developed in the literature review . The implications that emerge from these conclusions will focus on issues of equity and access in the schooling system, and how these impact on considerations of curriculum, teaching methodology and teacher training. In addition, implications for further research will be explored.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: ISSUES OF ACCESS, INCLUSION AND CRITICAL ACTION

‘...one good measure of the way in which power is distributed is to ask how many and what genres different groups in society have access to’ (Martin 1989: 37). This quotation provided a seminal impetus to this research, highlighting as it did a fundamental issue in relation to the teaching of writing in schools and in South African schools in particular. Martin was writing about the situation in Australian schools where he and Rothery concluded that writing, especially factual genres, was not explicitly taught and that this situation favoured bright middle-class children who were able to acquire the necessary writing skills by ‘osmosis’ (61). Working-class, migrant and Aboriginal children, on the other hand, do not have the cultural capital (Bourdieu 1990) which would enable them to acquire writing skills without explicit teaching. The result is that writing skills in a variety of powerful genres are selectively passed on in the education system, hence Martin's conclusion that access to genres is directly linked to access to power in modern society. The quotation seemed particularly relevant to the situation in South Africa where vastly different and unequal outcomes are a feature of the education system. An understanding of how and why this occurs is crucial and thus an investigation to find out how many and what genres different groups in South African society have access to would contribute to this understanding.

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature that gave impetus to the research and informed the analysis of the data collected. Its purpose is also to develop an understanding of different approaches to the teaching of writing and their theoretical underpinnings, and to develop criteria by which to evaluate the teaching of writing. To do this, the chapter focuses on current approaches and debates around the teaching of writing, especially around process and genre-based approaches. There is a particular emphasis on Cope and Kalantzis's (1993a,b) and Luke's (1994) linking of genre-based approaches to issues of inclusion and access. A central text is ‘The Powers of Literacy: A Genre Approach to Teaching Writing’ edited by Cope and Kalantzis (1993b). It brings together a range of perspectives on genre-based approaches, and explores debates around the approach, classroom and assessment practices, and the role of

grammar in the teaching of writing. It thus provides a comprehensive exploration of the issues surrounding genre approaches which can be related to insights from other readings. Developments that arise from debates around genre approaches, such as the New London Group's (1996) pedagogy of multiliteracies, are also discussed. These approaches, and the debates around them, are explored in order to develop guidelines for the collection of data around the issues that arise from the literature, and also to establish criteria for effective writing programmes that enable an analysis of the data collected.

2.1 History of Literacy Pedagogy

Kalantzis and Cope (1993) in their chapter 'Histories of Pedagogy, Cultures of Schooling', offer a useful history of developments in pedagogy and the implications for the learning and teaching of literacy. The chapter argues that in order to understand widely divergent cultures of schooling evident in the classroom practice of different schools it is necessary to understand their historical origins. They categorise these cultures of schooling into three broad categories: the 'traditional pedagogy of a classical canon' (42), the 'progressivist pedagogy of modernism and experience'(45) and the 'progressivist pedagogy of postmodernism and difference'(48).

Traditional pedagogy is associated with the development of institutionalised mass schooling whose underlying epistemology assumes fixed and constant 'facts' and 'truths'. This was further entrenched by the new pressures towards standardisation and technocratic rationality brought about by technological and social change. The development of printing and textbooks were key influences in standardising grammar and spelling. Thus the idea that there was an objectively correct standard usage of a language further entrenched the idea of cultural fixity and traditionalism. It also served to elevate the written text to the status of canon. Furthermore, knowledge was reconstituted through its transition from oral language and sounds to written language arranged in a spatial order. This transformation further entrenched the idea of knowledge as objective and universal truth through the voiceless and depersonalised language of written text.

This conception of knowledge impacted on pedagogy in a number of ways. In essence it resulted in: a focus on great books and the western tradition idealised in ancient Greece and Rome; a

sense of unquestionable facts and moral truths arising from the written word that represented this tradition; and a focus on memorisation and correctness. Consequently, access to this tradition and standard forms of language were means of maintaining class exclusiveness. The primacy of unquestioned written text in traditional pedagogy and mass schooling was reinforced by rigid systemic arrangements from administration through to syllabuses, classroom practice and examinations. Content was thus prescribed, presented and tested while classroom interaction and time was dominated by the teacher presenting information to the whole class arranged in rows facing the blackboard.

Literacy learning in this paradigm thus became the process of learning to speak and write according to prescribed and absolute standards of grammatical correctness. It took the form of memorising spelling lists; rote-learning decontextualised traditional grammar rules; writing compositions assessed according to their compliance with the grammatical conventions of 'standard' English; and testing correct spelling and grammar in formal examinations. Literature had a primary role as a model of correct usage and as a means of inducting students into the moral values of Western culture.

Traditional education played an important and specific socialising role in the development of mass education and the construction of industrial society during the nineteenth century. Ideals of objectivity and disciplined order, and knowledge of 'facts' were seen as the basic requirements of the new order. Literacy learning, through the primacy of the textbook, was thus a crucial instrument for socialising children into this new order which demanded 'punctuality, respect, discipline, subordination...' to create 'a controllable, docile, and respectful workforce, willing and able to follow orders' (Graff 1987: 262).

The writings of John Dewey and others in the early twentieth century ushered in a new approach to schooling. It was founded on an ideology of movement, change and progress in stark contrast to the idea of a fixed and immutable canon as propounded by the traditionalists. This approach mirrored the confident culture of industrial progress and technological dynamism of the time which valued progress, development, modernism, an interventionist relationship with the natural world, and risky experimentation and creativity. These values, Dewey felt, could not be

inculcated via textbooks which upheld values of unchanging rigidity handed down from the past. In opposition to the traditionalist view of learners as passive and obedient receivers of knowledge imposed from above, Dewey's progressivist education propounded individuality, free activity, experiential learning, acquisition of real-life skills for real-life purposes, and creative ability to adapt to an ever changing world.

In opposition to what he felt was the inculcation of dependency by traditional approaches, Dewey developed the notion of organic growth which posited a less interventionist approach by the teacher and placed the learner in the role of questioner and experimenter. This notion, Dewey felt, responded to three fundamental problems of the traditional curriculum. The first was that it had little relevance to, or connection with, the child's life. Knowledge and learning needed to have explicit meaning and purpose for the child, otherwise it became purely symbolic. This in turn created the second problem - the lack of any reason for the learner to be motivated. If learners are able to 'own' the purpose of their learning then this should provide the motivation to develop the means to accomplish that purpose. Thirdly, the traditional curriculum was to Dewey a gross simplification of the complex and messy reality of a changing world. This removed the challenging task of exploring this reality in a process of active discovery on the part of the learner. Dewey felt that education needed to prepare learners for the development and maintenance of a democratic society and the traditional curriculum was inappropriate for this task being, as Dewey saw it, a reflection of an autocratic world view. Therefore Dewey felt that the learners should experience democracy in classroom processes. This would inevitably change the function and role of both the teacher and learner. The pupil becomes an active questioner and experimenter, and the teacher becomes a facilitator rather than the total controller of the learners' knowledge.

Dewey's view that progressivist education underpinned the dynamism of a burgeoning technological world meant that literacy was no longer seen from the traditional standpoint as a means of social control and stability. Literacy was therefore seen as a basic tool for the building of modern technological and democratic societies. Literacy served social rather than abstract purposes and therefore literacy teaching should be rooted in the learners' experience of, and growing encounter with, the real world. It should be 'done in a *related* way, as the outgrowth of

the child's social desire to recount his (sic) experiences and get in return the experiences of others' (Dewey 1900: 55-56). While Dewey's literacy teaching differed in methodology from traditional approaches it shared a similar cultural purpose: the acquisition of standard English. The emphasis on motivated student activity in Dewey's view served the interests of progress and modernity and similarly the acquisition of standard English served a practical purpose in industrial society. In the context of vast immigration into modern America, Dewey saw literacy as a means of erasing cultural difference. The need to create a new cultural singularity in the same political unit through a common language (standard English) was seen as a paramount task of public schooling. The development of progressivist curricula was thus a product of social and economic shifts which required different learners and outcomes. Similarly, changes in the late twentieth century saw the emergence of another educational paradigm which Kalantzis and Cope (1993) called 'the progressivist pedagogy of postmodernism and difference' (48).

While this new paradigm shared Dewey's concern with student activity, motivation and experience, it diverges in other fundamental ways. Instead of emphasising the need for cultural assimilation the new progressivism foregrounds 'difference, discontinuity, rupture and irreversible cultural and linguistic fragmentation' (Kalantzis and Cope 1993: 48). Dewey saw modernity and progress as homogenising forces and education as a means of supporting and developing this process. The postmodernists see a world of differences and discontinuity in which there is no unifying or universal culture, symbols or narratives, 'just multifarious readings or interpretations of the world, coming into play in contingent and fortuitous moments of intertextuality' (ibid). Dewey sought to replace the meaningless, dislocated, decontextualised symbols of traditional curricula with the new symbolism of a meaningful industrial modernity. The postmodernists, on the other hand, see a multiplicity of symbols with no consistent meaning accessible to all.

The postmodern view of curriculum is thus that all knowledge is personal, based on the subjective experience of different individuals. Humans, as active meaning makers, construct their individual world and their meanings through the filter of their own unique experiences. Knowledge is thus a peculiar and individual construct of that unique experience. Consequently there can be no single or universal pedagogy. Differences in culture, learning style and discourse

should be accommodated by the school and no attempt should be made to assimilate these differences under some notion of a universal pedagogy. Curriculum has thus to be relevant to the unique and different cultures of experience that participants bring to the classroom.

Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) highlight the decay of 'master narratives' or discourses, for example, views of the world such as western culture, and the necessity of legitimating other marginalised or 'subaltern' discourses. This necessity places the concept of 'voice' as central to postmodernists' formulation of an alternate pedagogy. The authority of western culture, or Dewey's homogenising modernity, would necessarily limit the possibility of students' own voices being legitimated and developed in the classroom context. Making a space for students' voices 'entails replacing the authoritative discourse of imposition and recitation with a voice capable of speaking in one's own terms, a voice capable of listening, retelling, and challenging the very grounds of knowledge and power' (Giroux 1988: 165).

Giroux and Aronowitz belong to one school of postmodernist thought on education, namely critical pedagogy, which other theorists such as Ellsworth (1989) would see as presumptuous, culturally laden and thus ultimately oppressive and disempowering. Critical pedagogy sets out to challenge regimes of power and is based on 'actions informed by a disposition to act truly and rightly' to counteract oppressive structures and the practices which sustain them (McLaren 1989: 181-182). Language and knowledge are the products of social structures and student 'voice' determined by the different subjective situations they find themselves in within those social structures. Critical pedagogy is seen by postmodernists like Ellsworth to lay claim to certain universal assumptions about the rational person which she would claim have as their counterpoints the oppressive notion of the irrational 'other', thus marginalising women, exotic cultures and certain discourses (Ellsworth 1989: 39-41). To teach any one discourse is culturally laden with a presumption that other discourses are inferior. This sort of practice would thus marginalise those discourses outside the one being taught. For example, the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach promotes the idea of active student participation in communicative activities and sees the role of the teacher as facilitator and observer. This could be seen as reflecting Western English modes of discourse where social distance and status are not as strongly marked as in other cultures. CLT could thus be seen as marginalising learners

from those communities and cultures who would mark the teacher's status and social distance with silence and respect. In postmodernist terms a course cannot presume to do more than provide a facilitative space for students to find a voice for views which are representative only of their own particular individual, cultural and socio-economic experience.

Postmodern progressive theories have in common a belief in placing the curriculum in the hands of the students. This would inevitably imply a diversification of curriculum content to accommodate the diversity of student experience and interest. There can, therefore, be no set curriculum and the role of the teacher is to facilitate student-driven exploration of their concerns and interests. Kalantzis and Cope quote Garth Boomer on the discourse and role of the teacher in the postmodern classroom:

Lessons develop from the responses of students and not from a previously determined 'logical' structure. The only kind of lesson plan, or syllabus, that makes sense to [the good teacher] is one that tries to predict, account for, and deal with the authentic responses of learners to a particular problem...(Boomer 1982: 3 cited in Kalantzis and Cope 1993: 51).

This sort of curriculum has two important implications. The first is that it would of necessity have much of the classroom time taken up with students communicating with each other in teacherless groups. The second is that it would be a pedagogy without closure, expressly and determinedly open to difference.

As regards language teaching and learning, postmodernism sets itself against any approach which would make language a means of elitist separation whereby learners are tracked into different streams according to their control of a standard variety of a language. The connotations of 'standard' with linguistic normalcy or superiority is anathema to postmodern thinking which would seek to promote all dialects as linguistically equal. The teaching of traditional grammar would marginalise non-standard dialects. Thus in keeping with the idea of a 'pedagogy of voice' postmodernists would see it as essential that schools teach language in such a way as to legitimate all student discourses or linguistic codes as different but not inferior.

In relation to the teaching of writing, postmodern practice is most closely associated with

‘process writing’. Process writing according to Murray (1982) emphasises the need for students to find a ‘voice’ through a process of self-discovery free of any authoritarian presence of the teacher. The role of the teacher is seen as one of support as learners find their own way to their own truths. ‘It is not the job of the teacher to legislate the student’s truth. It is the responsibility of the students to explore his [sic] own world with his own language, to discover his own meaning’ (Murray 1982: 16). Writing is seen by Murray (1982) as a solitary process whereby learners find their own voices and become creative individuals. Learners should thus choose their own topics to explore, reflecting their own concerns and interests, and these explorations should be legitimated and supported by the teacher. In this way, it is believed, learners of different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds would be able to overcome the alienating experience of schooling which legitimated only the mainstream voices of middle-class learners. Process writing is conceived of as a number of steps (motivation, generation, drafting, reformulation, editing, publishing) through which the teacher would support the learners in the exploration of their worlds and in the development on their voices.

The literature on process approaches to writing reveals important differences in what is foregrounded about the approach. While protagonists such as Murray and Graves focus on the aspect of finding ‘voice’ through individual choice of subject matter, Coe (1986) and Zamel (1985) place much more emphasis on the *intervention* of the teacher and/or peers at all the different stages of the process. Coe feels that the shift from learning ‘facts’ to learning processes often became an overemphasis with many teachers. While he acknowledged the liberating possibilities of expressive or creative writing in helping learners develop confidence in their own voices, he felt it should be seen as ‘a stepping stone toward other kinds of writing competency’ (Coe 1986: 275). He felt that this overemphasis by many practitioners of the process approach led them to ignore one of the primary obligations of a literacy programme, namely, the development in students of the abilities required in the society they lived in - vocational competence and social effectiveness (Coe 1986: 275-276). ‘To some extent this was because the pedagogy was poorly implemented: In theory, expressive writing ability was just a starting point, but in practice it became the curriculum’ (ibid: 276).

This is precisely the criticism that began to develop in Australia after the enthusiastic

implementation of the process approach in that country. Boomer (1992), addressing what he called the 'progressives' of literacy education in Australia, attested to their hard fought struggles in the seventies against 'the reductionist peddlers of language building blocks and rat-psychology behaviourism' (2). In the eighties their previous progressive 'heresy' was in place as the new orthodoxy in the form of system curriculum guidelines for English/Language Arts and Literacy, and an Early Literacy Inservice Course training teachers in 'progressive' methodologies. He listed ten characteristics of the newly orthodox 'progressive' literacy teacher such as: caring/harmonising; naturalistic; individual-oriented/experience-based; process-oriented; non-judgemental; facilitative/manipulative; romantic/a-political. Boomer describes progressive literacy teachers as being focussed on the development of the whole child, each of whom are valued for their individual uniqueness, and on the paramountcy of the expression of personal meaning (the development of 'voice'). The processes in the development of this voice are given more value than the outcome or product. Progressive teachers are non-judgemental and do not adopt roles of overt or blatant authority. Instead they take on the role of guide, counsellor or friend as the most effective means of empowering the individual through developing their confidence in their own voices.

Boomer, however, is critical of progressive teachers and their methods in his address. He feels that progressive teachers are ultimately manipulative in that their facilitative, non-judgemental role results in a hidden curriculum which is not made explicit to the learners. This progressivism is more at home in middle-class schools with middle-class learners and it is specifically this lack of explicitness which he feels has led to the failure of progressivism to combat the problems of those learners who are not part of 'mainstream' middle-class school practices.

I have had to confront the depressing evidence that, despite our rhetoric and courses and good intentions, we have not made substantial gains in the teaching of literacy to Aboriginal children, children from low socio-economic backgrounds, and certain children from ethnic minorities; if, that is, one key indicator of success is completion of a full 12 years of schooling. (Boomer 1992: 4)

Boomer argues that 'progressive' literacy teachers, as he has described them, need to question: what values and attitudes were inculcated with the literacy they were teaching; whether it

entrenched existing patterns of domination and inequity; and whether it really brought literacy teachers to grips with the reality of literacy for marginalised communities. Like Martin (1989), Christie (1995), and Cope and Kalantzis (1993 a,b) and Kalantzis and Cope (1993), he felt that a methodology that valued process over product was unlikely to provide marginalised groups with explicit literacy knowledge and skills that would enable them to be truly empowered, able to gain access to, and participate in, society through an increased ability to operate more effectively in different realms of social action and interaction, of social influence and power (Kress 1989; Christie 1989).

Boomer examines the challenges and curriculum implications of postmodernism, in particular, the work of Henry Giroux (1990). Against progressives' 'inclusive curriculum' he posits Giroux's 'border pedagogy'. Boomer interprets this to mean that teachers leave the borders of their own experience and, in a reassertion of the *authoritative* role of the teacher, lead learners beyond the confines of their own experience. As Giroux writes, it "is not enough for teachers merely to affirm uncritically their students' histories, experiences and stories. To take student voice at face value is to run the risk of idealising and romanticising them" (Giroux, 1990: 45). The implications for Boomer are that literacy teachers need to be able to work with the different cultural frames of marginalised groups, not with the intention of only giving 'voice' to this experience, but also working *from* it to challenge and go beyond learners' world views, not 'benignly' to accommodate them. In this process teachers explicitly make learners aware of their own world view and make it open to challenge in the same way as the teacher challenges the learners' world.

Boomer also counters the Deweyan and 'progressive' view of the 'self-actualising individual' as one that ignores broader political issues of domination and inequity. He feels that by making the individual the focus of reform, progressive approaches such as 'cooperative learning' and 'whole language' too easily become coopted to become, in his words, 'simply a new "softer" technology of surveillance and control, as well as being a cover for "more of the same"' (Boomer 1992:11). His major criticism is that the focus of progressive classrooms on the curriculum arising 'naturally' out of student interest and experience makes the role of the teacher invisible. It is this hidden aspect which Boomer finds manipulative in that the actual constructedness of the

curriculum is not made explicit 'and the teacher, in seeming not to design, has palpable designs on the learner' (Ibid: 7). Furthermore, this focus on the individual is seen as a middle-class construct which ignores the otherness of different communities in the classroom. It ensures, as Martin (1989) has maintained, that middle-class learners are favoured in such classrooms, and others are not given the explicit teaching that would enable them to acquire the literacies that are powerful in society. They would thus be denied access to wider realms of social action and social power.

Boomer states that a primary goal of literacy teaching should be to produce 'useful citizens'. He points to a danger of much postmodern practice: '... we may become so self-conscious (and other-conscious) that all we can do is deconstruct the 'texts' of the world, losing the name of political action by thinking too precisely on the event' (Boomer 1992: 6). To this end, and in opposition to 'progressivism', Boomer posits the concept of the *Epic Teacher*, taken from Brechtian Epic Theatre where an estrangement effect is created to ensure that the audience is aware of the theatrical effects being used didactically to influence their opinion. This estrangement makes the theatre overtly intentional with the purpose of making the audience more critical, able to see the familiar and accepted in a new light. Taking this concept into the classroom, Boomer contrasts Epic Teachers to 'naturalistic' teachers as being those who would explicitly uncover for learners the curriculum as a construct designed to have certain effects on them. Epic teachers would cultivate estrangement in relation to the knowledge being taught, and to both their and their learners' world views: 'Whereas the naturalistic teacher would manipulate by deceptions or "silences", the Epic Teacher would manipulate explicitly and self consciously' (Boomer 1992: 7).

Epic Teachers display characteristics different from those of the progressive teachers described earlier. They are: Caring; Class-Oriented/Dialectically Based; Epic; Product/Performance-Oriented; Judgemental; Serious; Uncertain; Reflective/Pragmatic; Didactic/Manipulative; and Strategic/Political. Thus Epic Teachers are concerned with the whole society and building the capacity of learners to operate in, and transform, that society. They work dialectically to explore critically both the learners' and the teachers' experiences, and the 'texts' (knowledge) they are dealing with. They will accept and be open about their authoritative and judgemental role and

make explicit the values, skills and attitudes they are attempting to inculcate in their learners. They will thus focus learners towards a product, making explicit the criteria (based on the real world expectations of the school, the system and society) for effective accomplishment of that product. They will also develop in their learners appropriate strategies that will enable them to meet those expectations. The Epic Teacher, according to Boomer, thus creates an 'explicit/exposed' classroom which marginalised groups are more likely to succeed in than the 'implicit/naturalistic' classroom of the progressives.

2.1.1 Genre-Based Approaches to the Teaching of Writing

Many of Boomer's criticisms of progressive process approaches to writing are taken up by protagonists of genre approaches to writing (Martin 1989; Cope and Kalantzis 1993 a,b; Kress 1993; Christie 1995). Like Boomer, they contend that the writing experiences of most Australian learners is dominated by what is called 'creative' narrative writing and an overwhelming emphasis on the development of students' 'voice'. The upshot of this is that learners are not taught what Coe (1986) termed 'vocational competence' and 'social effectiveness' (276). What learners are denied is access to effective factual writing, to genres such as explanation and exposition, which genre approaches consider powerful in society in that they provide learners with ability to participate in wider realms of social action and power. A school experience dominated by creative narrative writing is unlikely to provide the necessary empowering experiences for all learners across the socio-economic spectrum. They contend that different genres can be classified according to their social purpose and that structural and linguistic conventions have evolved to accomplish these purposes. Consequently, explicit knowledge of these structural and linguistic conventions would enable writers to meet more effectively the expectations of the society in which they were communicating. In this sense they would be able to achieve more social purposes through their writing and thus be empowered to operate and participate more effectively in society. As Christie (1989) wrote in the foreword to the Oxford University Press Language Series:

Language is a political institution: those who are wise in its ways, capable of using it to shape and serve important personal and social goals, will be the ones who are 'empowered'....: able, that is, not merely to participate effectively *in* the

world, but also *to act upon it*, in the sense that they can strive for significant social change. (x)

Martin (1989: 15-17) characterised the main types of factual genres as follows:

- Procedure - how something is done
- Description - what some particular thing is like
- Report - what an entire class of things is like
- Explanation - a reason why a judgement is made
- Exposition:
 - Hortatory - persuades readers to *do* something
 - Analytical - persuades readers that *a judgement* is correct

Martin and Rothery (in Martin 1989) investigated the writing done by Australian learners in Sydney from years 1-6. The results pointed to the basis of their critique of writing practices in those schools. They collected 1500 texts and found that only 228 (15%) were factual writing. Of this factual writing, 189 (13%) were Reports, 31 (2%) Procedures, and 8 (0.5%) Explanations and Expositions. Most of the other 1272 texts were writing of the narrative/expressive kind. They also found that up to year 6 most of the factual writing was done by the good writers and, in year 6, it was the good and average writers who wrote most of the Reports, Procedures, Explanations and Expositions. Their conclusions were that: average writers were starting factual writing very late in their school career; and poor writers were doing almost no factual writing at all. The overall implication of this was that important writing skills (how to write effectively in powerful factual genres) were 'being passed on selectively to just a few bright children' (Martin 1989: 53-54). Martin, Christie and Rothery (1994) cite research by Gray (1986) which indicates a similar scenario for Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory of Australia. Throughout their primary school these children experience only recounts in fields such as: visiting friends and relatives; going hunting for bush tucker; sporting events; movies or TV shows they have seen (245). This amounts to '*pseudo choice*' (Martin et al 1994: 245) because the learners have a limited range of experience to draw on and they have to make use of these. This sort of choice is not enabling. The teachers do not guide learners into a variety of genres and create choices for them.

Martin (1989) contends that success in education depends on writing and this selective access to written genres means that schools are operating in the framework of a hidden curriculum. Consequently, this serves to reproduce the existing social order in society. Bright middle-class children, by virtue of their familiarity with the discourse practices of schooling, are more likely to learn by 'osmosis' what is required of them. In contrast:

Working-class, migrant, or Aboriginal children, whose homes do not provide them with models of writing, and who don't have the coding orientation (in Bernstein's sense) to read between the lines and see what is implicitly demanded, do not learn to write effectively (Martin 1989: 61)

In response to what they perceive as the failure of progressive process approaches to address issues of access and equity, Cope and Kalantzis (1993b) develop what they call 'an explicit pedagogy for inclusion and access' (64). In the first instance they argue that the 'bias inherent' (67) in process approaches towards narrative/expressive writing obscures both the differences between speech and writing and important generic differences in the types of writing demanded in schooling. This knowledge would be crucial to the development of powerful and effective literacies in society. Thus these 'hidden' aspects have important consequences for learners who do not necessarily have the experiences or tools to uncover them. This results in important aspects of the literacy curriculum being 'hidden' from learners and has important consequences for those who do not have the experiences (cultural capital) or tools to uncover them.

Cope and Kalantzis (1993b) maintain that process approaches tend to collapse oral and written discourses, whereas they argue that these discourses 'do very different things, in very different ways, in very different contexts' (64). There are fundamental differences between the ways in which orality and literacy provide clues to communicative intentions and audience expectations. Orally, the face-to-face nature of communication gives interlocutors the resources of intonation, gesture and immediate feedback to provide clues. These elements are lacking in written communication which thus relies on knowledge of genre. These differences are not absolute and some speech, like the academic lecture, has characteristics of writing, and some writing is close to speech such as the personal letter. However, the social domain of speech is primarily the private sphere and that of writing the public sphere, and it is when power is disputed in the public

sphere that speech will display some of the features of written language such as formality and distance. Thus the syntax of writing feeds back into the syntax of speech when social power in the public sphere is at stake. However, the fundamental differences between speech and writing permeate through to their respective grammars, and for learners to gain access to powerful literacy in the schools it is important that this grammatical knowledge is made explicit to them.

There are parallels between the notion of an association of the public sphere with the distinctive grammar of writing, and the private sphere with the grammar of speaking on the one hand, and Bernstein's (1990) notion of elaborated and restricted linguistic codes on the other. He argues that learners from various communities fail at school because their domestic or community discourses are highly context dependent, what he calls restricted codes, whereas powerful academic or school discourses are context-independent, elaborated codes. While every person has access to the restricted codes of their communities, schooling provides inequitable access to the powerful elaborated codes. In effect the different ways of using language have different social effects, and to gain an understanding of the ways in which literacy changes oral language opens access to wider participation in social action. Schooling, Cope and Kalantzis (1993b) argue, should provide learners with equal social access and this can be achieved by making explicit the links between the different social purposes of language in different contexts on the one hand and predictable patterns of discourse on the other.

These predictable patterns of discourse and their genre variations are the second aspect of curriculum that process approaches obscure from learners. 'Genres are conventional structures which have evolved as pragmatic schemes for making certain types of meaning and to achieve distinctive social goals, in specific settings, by particular linguistic means' (Cope and Kalantzis 1993b: 67). Giving learners access to the linguistic means to achieve these social goals in ways that would be respected by their intended audiences would provide them with the possibility of wider participation in the society of which they are a part. In Bernstein's terms they would be able to move beyond the confines of their restricted codes to the wider possibilities offered by control of elaborated codes. This counters the progressivist notion of language as the expression of individual creativity by positing the notion that learners' linguistic power develops through an understanding of generic structures. These enable learners to make socially identifiable

meaning in ways that are accepted and respected in the communities for which they are intended.

It would thus be imperative that learners are made aware of the generic differences that exist in the different types of writing they are expected to produce in schooling and in the world outside school. There needs to be an explicit link made between the social purpose of text and the generic structural and linguistic conventions that enable the text to achieve its purpose powerfully and effectively. Protagonists of the genre approach maintain that certain genres are more powerful in terms of their social effects in modern society than others. Martin (1989), for example, sees explanation and argument as powerful genres in terms of their potential, not only to enable learners to participate more widely in society, but also to act on it. These genres are the most distant from everyday speech in that their linguistic realisations strive ostensibly for objectivity and distance. Against the progressivists' claim of the 'naturalness' of narrative, genre approaches maintain that it is only explicit teaching of genre conventions that will enable learners to achieve different social purposes and thus broaden their access to, and participation in, society.

2.1.2 Gee, Bernstein and Genre Approaches

Gee (1990) is another theorist whose ideas on discourses resonate with those of Bernstein and the genre approach. He develops the notion of Discourses as ways of displaying membership of a particular social group who associate through shared values, activities or interests.

A Discourse is a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network', or to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful 'role' (143)

Gee distinguishes between primary Discourses and secondary Discourses. Primary Discourse is the Discourse we acquire through our initial socialisation within the family that is in turn part of a particular community and culture. It signals our membership of a particular community and reflects how our ways of using language in oral communication with intimates is shaped by socio-economic and cultural factors. Secondary Discourses are those which develop out of our

membership of social institutions and communities beyond the family. Crucially they involve communication with non-intimates and open one to wider spheres of social action and interaction in society.

These more globally oriented, '*public sphere*' (my italics) secondary Discourses include ones used in schools, national media, and in many social, financial and government agencies, as well as many Discourses connected to various sorts of employment and professions. (152)

It is obvious that acquisition of secondary Discourses, as Gee describes them, is crucial to a person's access to power in society. These secondary Discourses all build on what we acquired as part of our primary Discourses and there is thus a distinct advantage for communities whose primary Discourses are close to the dominant Discourses. This is particularly marked in schooling where the acquisition of secondary Discourses for mainstream learners is facilitated by the extent to which family Discourses support or echo those of the school. This is because the parents, by definition, would have mastered secondary Discourses and incorporated many of their features into their primary Discourses. For students from minority or working class communities the situation is very different. Their primary Discourses are likely to conflict in many different ways (values, attitudes, ways of behaving, thinking, talking) from school-based Discourses which marginalised students might see as hostile to their community-based Discourses. Their Discourses are thus set up as barriers to the acquisition of school-based secondary Discourses. These differences and their educational consequences link to Martin's (1989: 61) earlier statement that learners from middle-class communities are likely to learn what has to be learned by osmosis, whereas learners from marginalised communities do not have Bernstein's (1990) coding orientation to understand what is implicitly demanded.

Gee develops two principles which apply to the teaching and learning of Discourses, an 'Acquisition principle' and a 'Learning principle' (154). The Learning Principle refers to overt instruction by processes of explanation and analysis that enables the development of meta-level cognitive and linguistic skills with which a learner can critique other Discourses. Without this Gee feels that pedagogy 'colonises' students, whereas meta-knowledge enables the development of 'liberating literacies' (156). The Acquisition Principle is described as a process of acquiring

something subconsciously by exposure to models and practice in situations which are 'natural' and 'meaningful'. Gee claims that this occurs without formal teaching in a process of what he calls 'apprenticeship', 'scaffolding' and 'social practice' (158). This creates some confusion because apprenticeship, modeling and scaffolding seem to imply explicit instruction, or overt structuring of experience similar to that proposed by genre approaches. The differences between what he sees as Acquisition and Learning are not always clear. What he does suggest is that, for classrooms to be places of acquisition, they must be 'active apprenticeships in "academic" social practices' (159). It seems that both the learning and acquisition principles, with their emphasis on overt teaching and apprenticeship, imply an authoritative role for the teacher similar to that posited by the genre approach.

There are obvious strong parallels between Gee's notions of primary and secondary Discourses, Bernstein's restricted and elaborated linguistic codes, and the genre approaches' linking of public and private spheres with the distinctive grammars of writing and speaking respectively. These parallels become more apparent when educational implications are explored. The following would seem to be the educational implications that emerge:

- The 'liberal/progressive' classroom which avoids explicit, overt exploration of the way things work is of no help (Gee 1990: 149). Genre approaches emphasise the necessity of explicit teaching of the distinctive grammar and structure of different genres (the way things work) to enable learners to achieve different social purposes effectively and thus open access to wider opportunities for participation in society. Bernstein, in analysing pedagogic practice, uses the concepts of 'framing' (1996: 26) to refer to 'the controls on communication in local, interactional pedagogic relations' (e.g. between teacher/pupil) over such aspects of pedagogic communication as: selection, sequencing, pacing, criteria, and social base. Where the framing is strong over these aspects of pedagogic practice Bernstein argues that there is 'visible pedagogic practice' (28). Weak framing he characterises as 'progressive', where the rules of the regulative and instructional discourse are implicit, and largely 'unknown to the acquirer' (28). He stresses that weak framing provides the acquirer with only '*apparent*' (his emphasis) control over the different aspects of pedagogic practice which progressive approaches' notion of voice so

strongly advocate. Singh and Luke in the preface to Bernstein (1996: *xii*) state that he

... offers the cautionary note that the idealism of these and other contemporary pedagogical models may paper over the actual distributions of power and the selective principles of control at work. Pedagogies based on unproblematic notions of individualism, which attempt to recognize and celebrate difference *per se*, may in fact deter an analysis of the very systems of unequal distribution, acquisition and 'valuing' of knowledge and competence they are so critical of.

These are precisely the criticisms of progressive approaches cited by Gee and protagonists of the genre approach (Martin, Christie and Rothery 1994; Luke 1993).

- There is shared notion of an 'authoritative' but not 'authoritarian' role for the teacher who, in Gee's terms, would provide both learning and acquisition opportunities to apprentice learners into secondary Discourses. He writes of 'overt teaching' by means of explanation and analysis and a 'master-apprentice relationship in a social practice (Discourse) wherein you scaffold their growing ability...through demonstrating your mastery and supporting theirs' (1990: 154). Genre approaches (Hyland 1992: 16; Martin 1993b: 194) emphasise the need for 'scaffolding'. They provide scaffolding through an emphasis on modeling and analysing examples of genres. Through these processes explicit criteria are developed with which to evaluate texts, and guided practice in writing different texts is provided for students using these criteria. Hyland (*ibid*, 16) and Martin, Christie and Rothery (1994) maintain that explicit knowledge of the linguistic and structural conventions of genres promotes 'more effective negotiations and consultations as well as providing each child with their own individual scaffolding that can be deployed to produce successful texts' (Martin et al 1994: 142). Bernstein's notion of visible pedagogic practice discussed earlier also implies a more authoritative role for the teacher similar to the 'explicit/exposed' classroom posited by Boomer.
- Another pedagogic implication would be the necessity for an explicit, systematic focus on grammar as a resource for making meaning in different social contexts. Singh and Luke (1996) in their preface to Bernstein's *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity* state that his model provides an understanding of 'how power and control are achieved systematically through the local organization of discourse'; and how, using Halliday and

Hasan's functional linguistics, 'pedagogic discourse itself can be analysed as an instance of the systematic connections between linguistic form and ideological function' (xiii). Gee (1990), in his definition of a Discourse refers to it as 'a socially accepted association among ways of using language' (143) which implies that, to be able to operate within that Discourse, one would have to have explicit knowledge of appropriate grammatical choices available to one to achieve communicative purposes within that Discourse. In discussing his Learning and Acquisition principles he refers to two types of teaching. Teaching_a refers to apprenticeship pedagogic practice that promotes acquisition of a Discourse whereas teaching_i is the overt teaching that leads to learning. He states that teaching_a without teaching_i, which is what many 'liberal' approaches to education practice, leads to what he calls 'colonized' non-mainstream students who have assimilated the Discourse and its values as subordinates. Their subordinate status within the Discourse is maintained and they become complicit in their own subordination. Truly 'liberating literacy' according to Gee must involve teaching 1 which provides the meta-knowledge or meta-language to acquire and master a secondary Discourse and to analyse and critique primary and other Discourses. Genre approaches also emphasise the need for a metalanguage: 'A linguistically informed approach to literacy assessment offers teachers and students a metalanguage (a linguistic technology) for entering into productive dialogue with one another and for reflecting in the communicative requirements of written tasks' (Macken and Slade 1993, 230).

Gee's scenarios of learners from non-mainstream communities outside of, or colonised within, secondary Discourses has echoes in Bernstein's (1996) concepts of classification (power) and framing (control), and recognition and realization rules. Bernstein uses the concept of classification to examine the boundaries that dominant power relations establish between the categories of, for example, discourses and practices. Thus the discourses of physics, geography, and history, for example, can have distinct identities with their own rules and particular realisations which allow a communicator to understand what is expected and legitimate within that discourse. Strong classification means that there are very clear boundaries between discourses. Framing refers to the means, such as pedagogic practice, of acquiring the legitimate message and the forms by

which the realisations of a discourse are made public. The classificatory principle indicates the limits of any discourse and how they differ from each other. It provides the key to the distinguishing features of the discourse and thus there are *recognition rules* whereby the communicator can orientate to the distinctive features of a discourse. Without the recognition rule, contextually legitimate communication (realization) is not possible. Bernstein postulates that ‘some children from the marginal classes are silent in school because of the unequal distribution of recognition rules’ (1996: 32). This would be equivalent to Gee’s description of learners who are outside of the dominant secondary Discourses of schooling. However, Bernstein makes a further distinction, namely, those learners who may have the recognition rule but are still unable to produce authoritative, ‘legitimate’ communication in a particular discourse. These learners do not have the *realization rule*. As far as schooling is concerned these children ‘will not have acquired the legitimate pedagogic code, but they will have acquired their place in the classificatory system. For these children, the experience of school is essentially an experience of the classificatory system and their place in it’ (Bernstein 1996: 32). This situation seems to parallel that of Gee’s colonised learners.

What both Gee and Bernstein imply with their criticisms of ‘liberal’ educational practice, is that ‘liberating literacy’, the acquisition of secondary Discourse or the realization rule, is partly dependent on an explicit understanding of grammar as a meaning-making resource - an understanding of the implications of grammatical choices in a given cultural context for the achievement of a given purpose.

Genre approaches to the teaching of writing emphasise the crucial role of an explicit knowledge of the link between the communicative purpose of a text and the conventional structural and linguistic realisations that enable that purpose to be effectively achieved in a particular culture. The genre approach to the teaching of writing grew out of Halliday’s (1978; 1985) theory of systemic functional linguistics through the work of Hasan (1978), Kress (1982), and Martin (1989). Their genre theory, which is a theory of language use, emphasises social purpose as a determining factor in language use. It is this theory, which underlies genre-based approaches to writing, that Martin and Rothery

developed further. In analysing and classifying texts they found that the purpose of a text coordinated the way in which field, mode and tenor choices combined. They were thus able to develop a model of the relationship between language and context. Derewianka (1998: 19) developed the following map to illustrate this relationship:

The model illustrates the four aspects of the context which impact on the reading and production of a text:

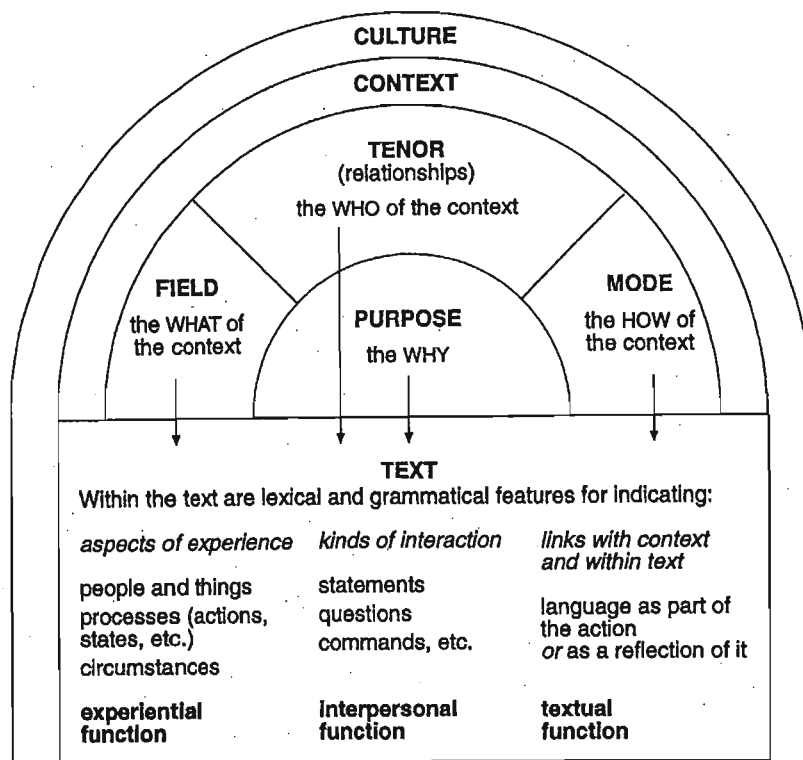
- the *purpose* or *genre* of a text and;
- the three aspects that make up the *register* of a text, namely, *field*, *tenor* and *mode*.

What the model indicates is that genres are shaped by their communicative or social purposes, and the recurrence of these social purposes results in linguistic and structural conventions developing around the way people achieve these purposes in their daily lives within their own cultures. Thus the purpose of a text shapes its structure and language, and the structure and

language choices of a text reveal its purpose. Martin, Christie and Rothery (1994) define a genre as a staged, goal oriented social process and each genre has its own structure: its own beginning, middle and end. These stages, or moves, both optional and compulsory, can be classified according to their function. For example, the basic compulsory stages of a narrative are Orientation, Complicating Action, and Resolution. Optional stages include an abstract which predicts the ending of a narrative ('Let me tell you about the time I made a fool of myself...'), and a coda, which relates the past events of a narrative to the present time ('And so I vowed never to take a chance at sea again').

The three other contextual features of a text that determine its meaning according to the model are field, tenor and mode. These correspond to three metafunctions of a text, namely, ideational (field), interpersonal (tenor) and mode (textual). Field is concerned with the type of human activity involved (the 'what' of a text) such as commercial, academic or social, to name a few. In schooling learners have to deal with texts in the fields of science, arts and the social sciences, and the texts they work with will vary according to these fields. Because of the variety of activities or tasks people are involved in, texts will vary a great deal along the field dimension. Texts also vary across the tenor dimension (the 'who' of a text) which reflects the relationship between the interlocutors in a text (reader and writer). The relationship between addressor and addressee will be reflected in the language used. For example, writers of narratives will want to develop a different relationship with their audience than writers of scientific reports, and this difference will be reflected in the lexicogrammar of the text. Lastly, texts will vary according to whether they are in the spoken or written mode. Mode is thus the 'how' of a text and is concerned with the role of language in constructing a workable, coherent text. For example, learners developing written texts will have to learn how to write 'context independent' texts to build up a context that readers will be able to understand using only the text in front of them. Writers will have to imagine the needs of an absent reader, and the written grammar used to do this will be very different from the grammar of spoken interaction where the audience is immediately present. It is these four contextual dimensions - genre, field, tenor and mode - that determine the structure (staging) and grammar (language) of a text, and enable the text to achieve its social purpose.

The theory of linguistics that enabled people like Martin (1989, 1993a) Christie (1989b, 1995) and Derewianka (1998) to say something useful about writing and the teaching of writing was Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFG). Martin calls it a 'linguistics for consumers' (1993: 119) because it 'focuses on the development of grammatical systems as a means for people to interact with each other - functional grammar sees grammar as shaped by, and as playing a significant role in shaping, the way we get on with our lives' (Martin, Matthiessen and Painter 1997: 1). Functional grammar is what it says it is, it focuses on the functions that language choices perform and thus it is flexible and based on the notion of grammar as resource for meaning making. Candlin (1998) states that SFG explains 'the significant and functional patterning of words in the making of meaning' (5), and that this implies that there is a system that enables principled choices to be made to ensure that our communicative purposes are most effectively achieved: 'What we say or write is always a matter of exercising those choices, designing our texts with some purpose in mind' (Ibid, 5). Furthermore, as has been stated before, in SFG the organisation of context correlates with the organisation of grammar through the association between register variables (field, tenor, mode) and the metafunctions of a text (ideational, interpersonal, textual). This context of situation occurs within the context of any given culture which is a powerful shaper of meaning. Butt et al (1998) state that the 'context of culture is sometimes described as the sum of all meanings it is possible to mean in that culture' (11). This relationship between culture, context, text and grammatical realisations is illustrated in the following diagram by Collerson (1995: 11):



Derewianka (1998: 4-5) listed a number of advantages of using a functional approach to language:

- it focuses on *meaning* and how language operates to make meaning at the *text* level and moves beyond the level of individual words and isolated sentences;
- it stresses how meanings are made/negotiated *in communication with other people*, which lends itself to group work and conferencing;
- it focuses on *real* language used in *authentic* settings and demonstrates how language operates in *all areas of the curriculum*;
- it also demonstrates the *possibilities of language use* to achieve more effectively different purposes with different audiences in different texts;
- it allows for the development of *clear criteria* for effective writing of different texts, thus facilitating clear identification of strengths and weaknesses and specific and positive suggestions for learners to make their texts more effective;
- and it gives learners an *explicit knowledge of language* with which to make *informed choices* when writing texts.

Thus, in relation to issues of inclusion and access of marginalised communities in the schooling system, the genre approach, like Bernstein and Gee, foregrounds explicit teaching of language

without which learners will be unable to make informed linguistic choices to maximise their chances of achieving different social purposes. Their chances, for example, of their academic arguments being ‘respected’ by the audience for which they are intended will be greatly enhanced by explicit knowledge of the link between the purpose of a text and its linguistic realisations. This same notion seems to be implied by Bernstein’s recognition and realisation rules which enable learners to produce authoritative, legitimate communication. Similarly, Gee’s Learning Principle refers to ‘overt’ teaching that enables the development of meta-level cognitive and linguistic skills (liberating literacies) with which learners can critique other Discourses.

2.1.3 An Explicit Pedagogy for Inclusion and Access

Cope and Kalantzis (1993b: 78-84) developed five basic principles for an *explicit pedagogy of inclusion and access*. These were:

- Classroom discourse is a subtle dialogue between students’ various linguistic and cultural backgrounds and the culture of schooling with its language of schooled literacy. Cultural and linguistic difference can become a positive resource for access. A reconstituted pedagogy will be inclusive by affirming difference as a resource for social and educational access.
- In an explicit curriculum for inclusion and access, teachers and their disciplined knowledges must be in an authoritative, but not authoritarian, relation to students.
- Lesson scaffolds need to be explicit, accessible to students and patterned in predictable ways. They need to be explicit in managerial terms and in the sequencing of curriculum content, even if this means producing textbooks that realise new pedagogical principles.
- Curriculum should be structured in explicit ways according to the fundamental structure of subjects.
- Schools are the products of human artifice. Immediate motivation lies in the schoolish task itself. Longer-term motivation will only come with the demonstrable capacity of the discipline and the school to provide social access without prejudice.

These five principles raise a number of important issues around the genre approach to the teaching of writing. Firstly, they foreground the issue of difference in the classroom. Gee (1990),

Bernstein (1996) and genre approaches criticised progressive teaching practices which ‘attempt to recognize and celebrate difference *per se*’ (Luke and Singh 1996: *xii*). Cope and Kalantzis principles borrow from progressive teaching in that they propose working from what learners know best, their own experiences and discourses (Delpit 1988), and moving outwards to negotiate access to the dominant discourses of social power and influence. This creates a sort of bidialectism or multidialectism (Gumperz, 1986) which both validates marginal discourses in the classroom and enables learners to shift between them and mainstream discourses when appropriate. Furthermore, Cope and Kalantzis (1993b) feel that this gives the learners from marginal cultural and linguistic backgrounds an advantage in being able to have a comparative insight into different discourses. This pluralism allows learners to move from their own discourses to the ‘theoretical, distancing modes of language and thought needed for successful...negotiation in or with dominant discourses’ (79) without submerging their own cultural discourse practices.

The five principles also foreground the importance of an authoritative role for the teacher in scaffolding learner experience into the unfamiliar discourses of ‘schoolish’ tasks. These tasks, to gain access to the distancing and reflective discourses of social power, are unfamiliar in form and content. Consequently, the teacher’s position of knowledge necessitates explicit structuring and scaffolding of learners’ experiences. Martin (1993b: 195) provides an example of such scaffolding that a teacher provided for writing up science experiments:

HEADING	WHAT TO WRITE	HOW TO WRITE IT
AIM	What do you think we were trying to find out in this experiment?	Write a short, single sentence statement beginning with the word ‘To.....’
METHOD	Describe in your own words exactly what you did.	1. Write numbered statements. 2. Use the word ‘we’ instead of ‘I’. 3. Use past tense - ‘was’ and ‘were’ etc.
RESULTS	Include a table of results	
CONCLUSION	What did you discover in this experiment?	Write a few short sentences explaining what you found

This sort of assistance would enable beginner writers to internalise the task demands of this sort of writing. As learners became more familiar with what is required of them so the scaffolding could be reduced. It is these sorts of experiences that are needed to move learners from familiar, concrete experiences and discourses to abstraction, generalisation and distance so that they are able to return to a reconceptualised familiar, concrete reality.

It is here that genre approaches draw on the theories of Vygotsky (1978) and their implications for pedagogical theory and practice. His central claim is that human consciousness is achieved by the internalisation of shared social behaviour. Thus an individual's life experience enables meaning connections around words to be made with other experiences which in turn make possible further links. This process begins with external observable social behaviour, and these situational, concrete associations are accumulatively replaced by 'abstractions that are capable of generalisation and definition (Cope and Kalantzis 1993b: 86). Through these transformations inner speech becomes inner thought (Cazden 1994). To illustrate these processes Cope and Kalantzis (1993b) use an example of the transformations that occur in a child around the meaning of the word 'family':

... the child moves from knowing one's relatives and significant others as 'family', to an understanding of the concept of 'family' and being able to locate this concept into an understanding of the role of the family in society. The same word becomes able to represent 'family' in new ways, both linguistically and in terms of underlying cognitive structures (86-87).

The notion that shared social behaviour is the basis of learning indicates the importance of the role of those who interact socially with the developing learner. Vygotsky emphasises the importance of mediation by adults or more capable peers in the process of a person's development from complex (situational) thought to conceptual thought (Moll and Slonimsky 1988: 19). This mediation opens up the learner to the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD) whereby scaffolded assistance can take learners beyond the limits of what they can do independently to the potential of what they can do with the guidance of authoritative others (Cazden 1994). Vygotsky defines the ZPD as 'the distance between the actual developmental level as defined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable

peers (1978: 86). Thus the formal instruction of schooling is potentially crucial to the process of transforming learners' everyday consciousness to thinking that links concepts to frameworks of meaning. Vygotsky also believed that control of the written language had a profound effect upon the development of abstract thinking. The constancy of the written language enables learners to reflect upon meanings and by so doing acquire a critical awareness of their own thought processes. Cope and Kalantzis (1993b) argue that these transforming processes are 'precisely the linguistic-cognitive processes involved in "doing grammar": from knowing the real world referents and associations (complex thought); to being able to understand that text as text operating grammatically in context and to generalise about its operations (conceptual thought)' (87). This is similar to Gee's notion of the development of meta-level cognitive and linguistic skills which enable learners to critique their own and other discourses.

Another issue arising out of the principles is the idea of accepting the school as an institution necessarily removed from the exigencies of the world of work, yet at the same time related to it in that its function is to prepare learners to participate effectively in it. This situation allows a reflexive space to develop important attributes for functioning in the working world, namely, the ability to think 'abstractly, theoretically and critically' (Cope and Kalantzis 1993b: 81). The school by definition takes learners beyond their own experience and this requires that they are motivated by an explicit awareness of a literacy which links genres to social purpose. This, Cope and Kalantzis argue, provides learners with a range of social choices. What is highlighted by the idea of reflexive space and abstraction is the development of what Luke calls a 'critical social literacy' (1994: 7):

Students who have grasped the fundamental structure of literacy will be able to denaturalise language and account for linguistic structure in terms of social purpose in the case of both dominant and less socially powerful or countercultural discourses (Cope and Kalantzis 1993b: 80-81).

2.1.4 Critiques of Genre-Based Approaches

Luke's critical social literacy and Cope and Kalantzis's five principles link to a general criticism leveled at genre-based approaches, namely that it takes for granted the critical aspect in a belief

that access to powerful genres will of necessity develop a critical distance and reflexivity. Critics (Kress 1993; Barrs 1994; Pennycook 1996) see three interrelated problems that stem from this, namely that genre-based approaches: encourage authoritarian modes of transmission; are assimilationist; and marginalise discourses of non-mainstream communities. They are seen as assimilationist in that they seem to accept dominant discourses uncritically and to focus on transmitting the 'rules' of these discourses uncritically to learners. Related to this issue is a second criticism that a genre approach, focusing on mainstream genres, would tend to ignore and devalue the discourses of marginalised communities in the classroom, resulting in a patronising missionary approach of bringing the 'superior' genres of social power to these groups. This is seen by Barrs (1994) as an example of 'how apparently democratic arguments about access can be used to justify authoritarian practices in teaching' (252). Critics such as Barrs interpret genre approaches' focus on powerful genres as a naive belief that power resides in the genres and not in the possibilities of their use, and question whether writers are actually in a position to reach audiences and be noticed and read (252). Cope and Kalantzis (1993b) respond to these criticisms by agreeing that the worst tendencies of the genre approach lean toward transmission modes and assimilationist models of education, but make the point that a 'curriculum which makes the discourse of social power and influence one of its authoritative knowledges need not erase diversity' (p. 79). While they see schooled literacy as centrally important, they see it as one of many knowledges that students learn. In their proposal for an 'explicit pedagogy of inclusion and access', Cope and Kalantzis (1993b) argue that such a pedagogy should not imply an erasure of difference and non-mainstream discourses but rather that the 'difference' of the communities that make up classrooms be seen as a resource. They see students who are outside socially dominant discourses as potentially advantaged in that they have the cultural and linguistic distance to more easily adopt a critical stance towards these discourses that are strange to their experience. This would allow students from the dominant groups to see their ways of communicating 'denaturalised', and this process could open the way for a more multigeneric, multicultural view of the discourses of the classroom and their value and functions. In this way a pedagogy of inclusion and access would potentially make difference a resource for access. It would develop awareness of ways of meaning across cultural and linguistic boundaries. At the same time it would give students access to new ways of communicating in new social settings without denying their own ways of communicating.

Kress (1993) raises the third problem around the tendency for authoritarianism in genre approaches. He offers a more diverse and critical version of genre, arguing that genre should be seen as a social process and as one of diverse 'register types' (dialect, mode, discourse, plot, character etc). It is 'one term which, together with others, forms the complex which constitutes significantly different types of text' (35). He sees the Martin/Rothery version of genre as more rigid and is concerned that with this tendency in the teaching of writing 'goes a corresponding tendency pedagogically towards an emphasis on form, and a tendency towards authoritarian modes of transmission' (35).

Hasan (1996) responds forcibly to concerns about the reproductive nature of genre-based literacy. She questions whether other pedagogies such as the 'self-expression, creative writing movement' is not reproductive by asking: 'What is 'self'? How is it constituted? What steps do these teachers take to ensure that the 'self' is not a reproductive projection?' (403). She feels that genre-based approaches are criticised for the reproductive tendencies precisely because they make their pedagogy so explicit that they permit that sort of discussion to take place. She feels that educational systems are inherently evaluative. As long as education systems of whatever kind continue to operate, they will operate within models and standards of what criteria, for example, learners' essays should meet.

Critical literacy may be right in saying that to teach educational genres is to reproduce existing knowledge structures, but as against this there remains the disturbing fact that to fail to master educational genres is to almost certainly collude in the reproduction of the inequalities of the social system at the cost of precisely those whose voice is absent from the educational curricula! (Hasan 1996: 404).

She argues further that being innocent of the prevalent ways in which language is used to achieve social aims is not going to bring about change in society. Martin (1993b) argues in a similar fashion about the teaching of science literacy where he warns against what he sees as an overemphasis on *doing* science and a neglect of writing in scientific genres: 'The functionality of these genres and the technicality they contain cannot be avoided; it has to be dealt with. To deal with it teachers need an understanding of the structure of genres and the grammar of technicality' (202). Hasan acknowledges that learning communicative abilities via genre-based

pedagogic practices does not necessarily encourage the reflection to challenge accepted practices; however, she notes that there are developments within the pedagogy that tackle these issues. These developments will be analysed later in this chapter. The debates indicate that ultimately it is how practitioners interpret the theories and approaches that affects pedagogical outcomes. Coe (1986), cited earlier, felt that many practitioners of the process approach misinterpreted it and overemphasised processes and expressive writing to the extent that they became the curriculum. He saw these as stepping stones to vocational competence and social effectiveness. Similarly, genre approaches can be interpreted in a way that would favour reproductive processes. In a country like South Africa, where there is a history of rote learning and authoritarian methods, there is a danger that teachers will assimilate genre-based approaches into their established methodology.

Johnson (1994) raises similar concerns to those of Kress in an exploration of the value of genre-based approaches for access and inclusion in the South African context. He links the 'mission' of South African education to the genre approach's argument that access to, participation in, and control of social institutions is related to access to powerful genres, and that learners outside the discourses of power need explicit teaching to gain access to these discourses. He sees the social mission of South African education as providing 'historically marginalised groups with equitable access to a broad range of social options' and forging a 'multilingual, multidialectical society which recognises and respects difference' (32). He argues that the achievement of this mission requires specific, explicit action and a theory which goes beyond mere 'immersion' and responds to the failures of traditional and progressivist approaches to education and language and learning (Ibid). While Johnson sees the genre theory and approach as relevant to this mission, he raises a number of concerns and questions. One concern was the need to develop a framework which would enable learners to gain control of genres through access to both 'top down' and 'bottom up' strategies for the production of effective written discourse. He sees a danger in teachers focusing on one or the other in a narrow reproductive way if they are not provided with a framework for the deployment of both strategies in the generation of texts. Like Kress, Johnson raises the question whether it is possible to use genres for teaching purposes in the South African context without reducing teaching to a narrow, formalistic prescriptivism and denying students the opportunity for reflecting critically on rhetorical or linguistic choices (1994: 52).

Interestingly, a newsletter of the South African Applied Linguistics Association (SAALA) commented on genre teaching in ESL. It reported on issues raised about genre-based approaches at a workshop attended by adult basic education and academic development language practitioners in September 1992. The points raised at the workshop corresponded to some of the issues raised above. Amongst others the practitioners highlighted the following:

- Genre-based approaches allowed a focus on whole texts rather than words or sentences because they link function and form of texts at all levels.
- Many ESL learners have problems switching to academic writing, and a focus on genre could be useful in this regard.
- They felt that genres should flow from tasks which would expose learners to the impact of audience and context on genres.
- Teaching should guard against genres being taught as THE culture. Learners should be encouraged to take a critical stance by being shown that genres have emerged as a result of certain values being held as important.
- Genres should not be seen as fixed and immutable, as conventions around what is accepted and respected change over time.
- The narrative/expository dichotomy was questioned as it was felt that narrative could be used for expository/factual purposes.
- Lastly, a concern was expressed that, in the South African context, there were many teachers who were inadequately trained and were without access to training. A consequence would be that teachers would ignore unfamiliar modes of teaching or assimilate them to traditional authoritarian ways. (Ledochowska 1993: 2-3).

These points link closely to a list of ‘understandings’ that Kress felt teachers and students should acquire. These can act as a guide to effective literacy teaching and learning in the schools (1993: 28). These are that:

- texts are produced to do some specific social and cultural thing and that all our communication is guided by conventions of generic form even when there is a conscious attempt to break generic convention;

- generic form is the product of particular social relations between the interlocutors involved in the production of a text, and power relations and differences enter into the production and maintenance of generic form;
- while generic conventions provide constraints about what can and cannot be done, generic form is always in a process of change and this creates possibilities for innovation and creativity;
- the grammar, the functions, forms and structures of language play a crucial role in the production of texts and their meanings.

All these issues have implications for pre- and in-service teacher training which will be discussed in the implications of the findings of this investigation.

2.1.5 The New Literacy Studies and Critical Social Literacy

Much of the impetus behind Cope and Kalantzis's five principles, Luke's critical social literacy, and the issues around genre teaching mentioned above, arise out of the New Literacy Studies (NLS) associated with the work of Street (1984, 1995), Graff (1981, 1987), Heath (1983), Baynham (1995), Gee (1990) and Barton (1994). The NLS challenged autonomous views of literacy that attributed universal social and cognitive benefits to the acquisition of literacy regardless of the contexts in which it might occur. The benefits were described as increased cognitive skills allowing for a detached, rational outlook essential for progress in a literate world. Research by those contributing to the NLS indicated that cognitive attributes could not be allocated so neatly across the literate-illiterate divide. For example, Scribner and Cole (1981) found that many illiterate urban adults displayed some of the skills and attributes normally associated with literates. Among the findings that emerged from NLS are that:

- cognitive abilities are the result of specific social practices, such as schooling, and cannot be directly attributed to the acquisition of literacy per se.
- skills acquired in one social context differ from those acquired in another.
- differing cultural and communicative practices create different orientations to literacy and learning, particularly in regard to the culturally specific processes whereby children are

initiated into the 'ways of knowing', such as literacy. When these traditions are close to the ways of schooling then children from those traditions have an advantage over others at school (Heath 1983).

These findings lead to an ideological view of literacy (Street 1984), as opposed to the autonomous view, that foregrounds both 'the social nature of literacy and...the multiple and sometimes contested nature of literacy practices' (Prinsloo and Breier 1996: 18). This view of literacy moves away from the notion of literacy as individual, discrete skills to notions of '*multiple literacies, domains and genres of literacy*' (Ibid, 19). It also moves away from the belief that schooled literacy should provide the norm for what counts as effective literacy as this constructs other literacies, and that those who do not have schooled literacy, as cognitively deficient. Prinsloo and Breier cite Bourdieu's (1986) concept of *cultural capital* as a means of understanding the relationship between multiple literacies. Schooling provides a specific cultural capital which is validated and powerful in the institutions of society. Coexistent with schooled literacy are other literacies which do not carry the same cultural capital such as local or social literacies (Prinsloo and Breier 1996). NLS, therefore, seeks to understand the existence and interaction of multiple literacies, both dominant and local in a particular context. The implications for schooling are seen as accepting, understanding and valuing these non-school literacies (private literacies) and finding ways of bridging the gap between them and the literacies of the wider public sphere consistent with the notions of multidialectism implied in the earlier discussion of Gee, Bernstein, and Cope and Kalantzis.

Drawing on the theoretical influences of the NLS, and the work of Bourdieu and Heath particularly, Luke (1994) develops genre theory towards an explicit critical social literacy. His starting point is that literacy refers to a range of practices which do not share equivalent power in terms of the access to, and participation in, society that they yield. He argues further that schools do not impart powerful and critical literacies equally to all. Like others mentioned in this chapter, Luke links these inequitable outcomes to the different literacies that diverse communities and subcultures socialise their children into. Children bring these diverse competences to school but may find that they are not recognised or are ignored in the mainstream interactional patterns that prevail in the schools. Heath's (1983) study showed how the home talk

of middle class parents, many of them teachers, mirrored the interactional and literacy practices of the school in terms of questioning, turn-taking, and procedures for communicating around texts. On the other hand, the home talk of the black and white working class families she observed socialised their children into different interactional patterns with the result that what was validated in their communities was likely to be ignored or considered deviant in the school system. Furthermore, the mainstream, middle-class teachers were not equipped to recognise or deal with this difference: 'The seemingly "natural" sequences of habits for them as mainstreamers were "unnatural" for many of their students' (271). Literacy, for Luke, is thus inevitably tied to the distribution of power in society and schools are a crucial gatekeeping sites of inclusion or exclusion to social access and cultural capital. It is at the micro level of classroom interaction that literate behaviour is 'shaped and regulated' (1994: 46) in ways that can have discriminatory consequences for different learners. These considerations lead him (ibid) to three central questions about content and methodology:

- What kinds of social power and cultural knowledge should be included and constructed in literacy education?
- Which texts, genres and competences should be taught?
- How should they be shaped in classroom lessons?

In response to these questions, Luke feels that any educational programme which is committed to providing equal access to an enabling and empowering critical literacy would require at base a recognition and understanding of the 'linguistic and ethnic, cultural and ideological differences' (1994: 32) that impact on the pedagogical process. This would lead to a far more representative and inclusive literacy curriculum which would give voice to diverse identities and experiences. However, while this would redress historical exclusions from the curriculum, of itself it would not provide access to the knowledges, discourses, texts, and genres that would have a significant impact on learners' participation in society as citizens and workers. To sum up, for Luke an explicitly critical social literacy would provide 'flexible and wide-ranging social competences with a range of texts; the capacity to use text for educational and occupational purposes; and the capacity to analyse and criticise the texts and ideologies of contemporary work and culture' (1994: 46).

2.1.6 The New London Group and a Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (POM)

The challenges to genre-based approaches and the issues raised by Luke's critical social literacy coalesced in a new orientation to literacy teaching known as the New London Group (NLG). This group brings together many of the key theorists mentioned in this chapter: Cope, Kalantzis, Kress, Allan and Carmen Luke, and Martin Nakata from Australia; Gee, Michaels and Cazden from the U.S.; and Fairclough from the United Kingdom. Their preliminary thoughts appeared in a paper entitled 'A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures' (1996). The term 'multiliteracies' reflects the challenges facing literacy teachers in a world of multiple means of communication and an increasing focus on cultural and linguistic diversity. Literacy programmes therefore need to achieve two related goals, namely, 'creating access to the evolving language of work, power and community, and fostering the critical engagement necessary for them to design their social futures and achieve success through fulfilling employment' (60). In achieving these goals literacy programmes need to engage with both the 'increasing multiplicity and integration of significant modes of meaning making' (64) brought about by the mass media, multimedia, and the electronic hypermedia and also with the 'realities of increasing local diversity and global connectedness' (Ibid). Effective citizenship and productive work increasingly require the ability to interact effectively across languages, dialects, interactional patterns and across cultures, communities and nations. Furthermore, programmes need to develop in students 'the capacity to speak up, to negotiate and to be able to engage critically with the working conditions of their lives' (p. 67). This they see as a 'transformed pedagogy of access' (72), in Luke's terms a critical social literacy, which provides access to a range of discourses, and thus to cultural and economic resources, without negating or erasing the discourses of marginalised communities.

The pedagogical framework they provide for the achievement of these objectives is a four-phase process of Situated Practice, Overt Instruction, Critical Framing and Transformed Practice. Situated Practice seems to incorporate confidence building processes by starting with the lived experience of learners and validating their voices and experiences in the way in which Cope and Kalantzis (1993) suggest marginalised discourses be brought in to the mainstream of the classroom. Overt Instruction reflects the need for explicit teaching and assessment practices

propagated by genre approaches and Boomer's explicit/exposed classroom and would develop in students control of the new language of work. A central feature of this phase is the development of metalanguages that 'describe the form, content and function of the discourses of practice' leading to formative assessment practices that serve as a guide to 'further thought and action' (p. 86). It is in this area of the framework that a genre-based approach would be relevant. Critical Framing is seen as the development in learners of a critical distance from what they have learned in order to 'account for its cultural location' (ibid) and thus to extend and apply their knowledge in new ways (Transformed Practice). For example, in a course aimed at developing students' academic writing abilities in a university environment, students might begin by telling stories of their own literate development at school and how these related to the demands placed on them in a university environment (Situated Practice). The overt instruction phase would explicitly teach academic exposition, building up a metalanguage around the structural and linguistic conventions and their relation to the communicative/social purpose of the genre. Critical framing would then involve students in questioning the primacy of analytical exposition in the university and the marginalisation of other genres and discourses within it, for example, the narrative/expository dichotomy. This could lead to the exploration of different ways of communicating academic issues, leading to transformed practice where this knowledge is put into practice. An example of this would be writing a narrative about a bus to make a statement about unequal access to transport and services (Ledochowska 1993:2).

Possibly because this paper represents the preliminary stages in the formulation of a pedagogy of multiliteracies there is a degree of vagueness about the content of the pedagogy. Pennycook (1996) interprets the NLG's *designs of meaning* - consisting of a framework of *available designs* (resources for meaning), the *designing* (what is done with these resources) and *the redesigned* (the changed resources after redesigning) - as showing 'how new meanings can be created from the available representational resources' (169). However, he feels that without a clear sense of the 'conditions of possibility' (ibid) for how such transformations can be achieved, it remains a vague formulation. Other problems emerge such as:

- There seems an inherent danger that the discourses of marginalised communities will only feature in the initial stages of situated practice and that they will be further marginalised

through the phases of critical framing and transformed practice. This could be avoided if the community discourses are an integral part of the transformed practice as the explanatory example on the previous page illustrated.

- There is a question of how different the pedagogy is from genre-based approaches. It seems that much of what has developed, or is at least implied, in genre-based approaches is replicated in NLG formulation. At essence there is a difference about what is foregrounded, and certainly it seems that genre plays a lesser role as it is spelt out in the paper. This raises the question of exactly how a POM will create access to a range of discourses which, in turn, provide access to cultural and economic resources and the language of work. How does one raise critical awareness of different discourses within the world of work and their linguistic realisations without the comparative basis that genre-based approaches provide? How does one develop learners' capacities in the language of work, 'the ever broadening range of specialist registers' (NLG 1996: 64), without involving them in an explicit, comparative examination of the social purposes of texts and the structural and linguistic conventions that develop around them? These questions would indicate a bigger role for genre-based approaches in fulfilling the objectives of a POM than outlined in the paper.
- There is also a vagueness about the meaning of 'transformed practice'. Does it refer to the practice of individual students or does it refer to wider institutional change brought about by challenging dominant discourses as a result of critical reflection processes? If the latter, how relevant is this to school pupils, especially ESL pupils, if this sort of critical literacy 'is most often practised by those who are already on top of the specialised demands of an academic discourse' (Macken- Horarik 1996:244)? While Janks (1993) has done interesting work on the possibilities of developing critical language awareness in the South African schools context, it would be a major achievement if ESL pupils in South Africa were to achieve an apprenticeship in different genres let alone go beyond to a critical transformative practice with those genres.

As indicated earlier this formulation of a POM is preliminary and, despite the problems mentioned, it does usefully focus attention on issues of building critical, reflexive capacity and foregrounding diversity and marginalised discourses. An interesting South African example of

how this pedagogy might be realised is provided by Stein (1995). She reported on a project in an urban African township primary school in the Johannesburg area where she worked with year 7 pupils (12-14 years of age). In what she called a Pedagogy of Re-Appropriation she involved the learners in a process of collecting and telling contemporary stories from their own communities. The class divided itself into groups that spoke the same language and related their stories to the group in the language in which it was originally told. The group then chose the best stories to tell to the rest of the class translating them into English where necessary. The class then commented on the story and different interpretations of it. What emerged was that students created contemporary versions of traditional folktales in which oral performance is a fundamental feature. This illustrated 'the ways in which communities transform or "redesign" meanings to work in new contexts and cultural sites' (6). Stein felt that the basic elements of a Pedagogy of Re-Appropriation in English classrooms meant:

- creating opportunities for marginalized genres and discourses to become part of the mainstream classroom;
- validating students' multilingual resources and their community oral language uses outside the classroom and thus placing them in the role of language experts;
- re-defining the relationship between orality and school-based literacies;
- re-evaluating assessment practices; and
- perceiving students as multimodal text producers, thus enabling teachers and students to 'critically explore the social production of their texts within an historical, social and political context' (13).

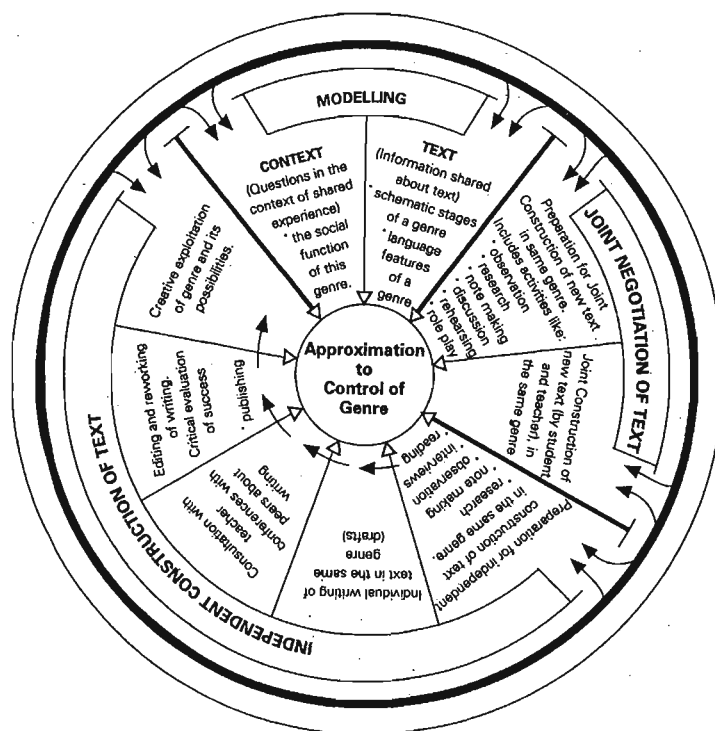
The interesting result that emerged from this project was that this class performed better in the examinations, not only in English, but in all their other languages as well – Afrikaans, Zulu and Sotho. Stein does not offer any explanation for this but the learners said 'The translation helped us ... we did not have to think only in one language, English. We could go in and out of our languages' (13). What can be surmised from this is that students benefitted from an explicit comparative awareness of language generated by the requirement to communicate the same story in different languages. Related to this is further work by Stein (1998) who in a seminar presentation reported on postgraduate students giving multigenre presentations, including oral

performance narratives, as a part of their assessment. This gave the different genres ‘institutional’ status and I feel could enhance the possibilities of changing learners’ perceptions about them.

The preceding sections have provided an overview of the development of writing pedagogy and its relationship to issues of access, inclusion and critical action with a particular emphasis on genre-based approaches to the teaching of writing. What follows will be an exploration of the methodology of genre-based approaches including assessment practices. This will enable criteria to be developed for effective writing programmes in schools against which the data from the investigation can be evaluated. The chapter will conclude by indicating how the literature review guided the research process.

2.2 Genre-Based Methodology

Genre-based approaches to the teaching of writing developed a methodology around four key elements. These can be described as: *modeling* (the analysis of good examples of genre to illustrate their structural and linguistic realisations); *guided practice* (the use of the frameworks developed in the modeling stage to write different genres, often jointly constructed by a class and teacher or guided by varying degrees of scaffolding provided by the teacher); *independent construction* (the writing of texts by individuals or groups using the guiding criteria and frameworks established in the first two stages); *constructive assessment* (the explicit use of the established criteria for comment on student work to provide formative guidance); *rewriting* (students rewrite their texts on the basis of the feedback received) (Hyland 1992, Macken et al 1989). This process is illustrated in more detail as a teaching-learning cycle represented by a wheel (Cope and Kalantzis 1993a: 11):



According to this cycle, the first phase would focus on the schematic structure and lexicogrammatical features of texts; the second on collecting information around the content for a particular text followed by the joint construction of a text; and the third would involve students in independent construction of texts by developing more content, drafting, evaluating, editing and rewriting.

Callaghan, Knapp and Noble (1993) criticise this teaching-learning cycle on both conceptual and practical grounds and offer ideas on an alternative process. Conceptually they see a fundamental problem with the idea of the curriculum genre as a cycle. This they feel creates an inevitable conflict between the demands of fulfilling content and focussing on a developing control of a genre. Learners can go through the cycle a number of times with one genre and this will not allow sufficient time to complete the knowledge demands of a teaching unit. What is likely to occur is that teachers will try to funnel all the relevant content through one text type. The authors feel that there needs to be a shift away from a 'product-based orientation to genre' (190), an issue picked up by the group of educators in the genre workshop described by Ledochowska (1993) earlier in this chapter. They felt that genres should emerge from tasks and that learners be helped to respond appropriately to audience and contexts in the tasks. This implies tasks that require multigenre responses and provide for the crucial pedagogical element of comparison and contrast which would enable learners to see how different social/communicative purposes are achieved through a variety of structural and linguistic realisations.

Callaghan et al identified a number of other problems with the cycle. They felt that it is an essentially behaviourist model that does not make explicit links between ‘the level of language abstraction being taught on the one hand, and the cognitive development of the students on the other’ (1993: 190). Secondly, it does not link assumptions about language learning to practice in the cycle. The assumption is that learners develop through interaction and mediation with adult mentors yet this is confined largely to the joint negotiation of texts. This is perhaps an unfair criticism as provision is made in the independent construction phase for consultation with teachers and peers. However, for teachers with little language teaching and overcrowded classrooms, the temptation is there to leave all their interaction with learners to the joint construction phase, a practice which has the potential of becoming a highly reproductive process. A third problem for Callaghan et al is a seeming lack of distinction between concrete, everyday knowledge and abstract knowledge to allow for a sequenced pedagogical process of moving students from the commonsense to increasing levels of abstraction.

These problems are summed up in the following questions:

Is a product-based orientation to genre productive from a pedagogical perspective?
Is the ‘curriculum genre’ a pedagogy or a flexible set of teaching instructions?
Is the joint negotiation stage (teacher scribing) good teaching practice?
What is the relationship of knowledge/grammar/text?
Is the pedagogical aim to reproduce genres or understand and control the above relationship of knowledge/grammar/text?
Finally, how can the process of reading/writing be explicitly connected to achieve the above aim? (Callaghan, Knapp and Noble 1993: 192-193)

In response to these questions Callaghan et al propose basic principles for a clearly defined pedagogy which involves ‘a structured sequence of input, analysis, generalisation and reflection, progressing from the concrete to the abstract, and back again’ (190). They see genres as social processes that are realised through the use of language and use this conceptualisation to develop a model for a process-based orientation to genre. They describe genres as social processes which describe, explain, instruct, argue and narrate, and under each of these processes list the genres that are used in society to achieve those social processes. For example, the social process of instruction is achieved by ‘logically ordering a sequence of events’ and the common instructional genres that are found in everyday life are procedures, instructions, manuals, science experiments, recipes and

directions (193).

They illustrate their pedagogy by describing a five-stage process that a class experienced around the theme of 'packaging' (194-201).

Stage 1: Concrete Materials . This stage presents what learners have already experienced or observed. Pupils were asked to bring examples of packaging and were required to: decide on different ways of classifying and describing the packaging; consider ways of organising information that classifies and describes; and analyse the genre for describing.

Stage 2: Generalising the Concrete. Students are introduced to the process of moving from their concrete experience to more generalised abstract knowledge. In the example of the packaging theme students arranged packages into groups and made lists under various categories such as their composition, functions and uses. They were then asked to explore the relationships between the functions and uses of packages and their composition. This was followed by listing groups of packages according to their recyclability and exploring the link between composition and recyclability. With this database pupils wrote classifications and compared and contrasted their writing with that of others. Grammatical issues that were explored in relations to classifications were relational verbs, technical names and terms, and how generic names and nominalisations are abstractions of concrete objects and activities.

Stage 3: Reading Models. Here reading models are explored in terms of purpose, structure, message and grammar, and linked to what the students experience in the stage 2 writing exercises. In the teaching example the information from the reading models could be used to add to the information already assembled about packaging.

Stage 4: Experiential-based Research: This stage involves students in experiential-based research. In the packaging theme it involved visits to packaging manufacturers. This gave students first-hand experience of the processes of packaging manufacture and the environmental and social issues that emanated from it.

Stage 5: Writing-Editing: Students are finally involved in writing and editing on a topic relevant to the area being explored. In the example an expository essay topic was set: ‘Packaging is an unnecessary burden on the environment. Discuss’. Leaving aside the vagueness of the direction word ‘discuss’, the essay provided an opportunity to explore expository genre and compare it to the other genres encountered over the five stages. It would thus indicate how successfully students had moved ‘from the concrete world of action into the abstract world of knowledge; ... from the temporally sequenced world of action recounts to the cause and effect world of rational argument; ... from the commonsense world of concrete phenomena to the abstract world of objectified knowledge’ (Callaghan et al 1993: 195).

Two grammatical issues that were explored in relation to expositions were verbs and conjunctions. Verbs were classified into: action verbs (actions going on in the world); mental verbs (actions going on in humans); and relational verbs (that define, describe or identify - ‘to be’, ‘to have’). Learners then placed verbs into these three categories from an essay arguing about packaging issues. This highlighted the predominance of action verbs in their writing in contrast to models of more mature writing where writers used nominalisations to change actions into things. Conjunctions were examined and the predominance of temporal and additional conjunctions in spoken language was highlighted. Students were asked to identify and classify conjunctions as temporal, additional, causal, comparative and exemplifying. The insights gained from this reflection on grammatical realisations were put into practice by students being required to rewrite, substituting, where appropriate, nominalisations for action verbs and using causal conjunctions that would be expected in the type of texts they were writing.

This brief description of the five stages indicates some significant differences from the wheel. Firstly, it is multigeneric in that the genres arise from the task of exploring packaging. Genres are an integral part of the teaching and learning processes used to cover the content. A reproductive, formulaic approach to genres is avoided by focussing on the relationship between knowledge/text/grammar. The whole process also allows for comparison across genres and shows how different purposes relate to different structural and linguistic realisations. While critical reflection on language and its impact on meaning is part of this process, and pupils engage in using the insights from this reflection to refine their writing, there is little evidence of wider

critical practices being integrated the learners’ experience.

The most integrated account of a genre-based approach, which incorporates the developments Hasan (1996) referred to, is provided by Macken-Horarik (1996). It integrates the movement from commonsense through abstraction to critical reflection, from apprenticeship to critical practice. Her contextual model, informed by systemic functional theory as a model of language in context, is based on research into the implementation of genre-based approaches to the teaching of literacy in secondary school classrooms. The research aimed at the development of a contextual model which goes beyond a narrow notion of register as an ‘ad hoc specification’ of field, tenor and mode, to one ‘broad enough to encompass learning in different subjects and general enough to indicate the level of difficulty students face in any learning situation’(234). She feels that such a model engages with a challenge basic to all educational learning, namely, ‘engaging with specialized forms of knowledge, learning to take up “expert roles” in different disciplines and gaining control of written discourse’ (ibid).

In order to capture the specificity of school learning, Macken-Horarik outlines three domains in which leaning takes place: the *everyday*, the *specialised* and the *reflexive*. These domains are represented in the following diagram (adapted from page 236).

Cultural domains and their relevant formations

Everyday	Specialised	Reflexive
Starting points: diverse and open ended	Access to dominant forms of knowledge, power and semiosis	Negotiating social diversity and competing discourses
1	2	3
Working with the contents of tacit knowledge, based on personal and communal experience	Assimilating and reproducing the contents of knowledge, based on formal educational experience	Questioning the contents of specialised knowledge, based on competing perspectives on experience
Playing out the roles and relationships of family, kinship and community networks	Taking up the roles and relationships of an incumbent member of the discipline	Deconstructing and reconstructing the roles and relationships of different social practices
Interacting with others, primarily through spoken language	Constructing texts (primarily written) which realise the meanings of the discipline	Challenging the meanings of dominant discourses (through different media)

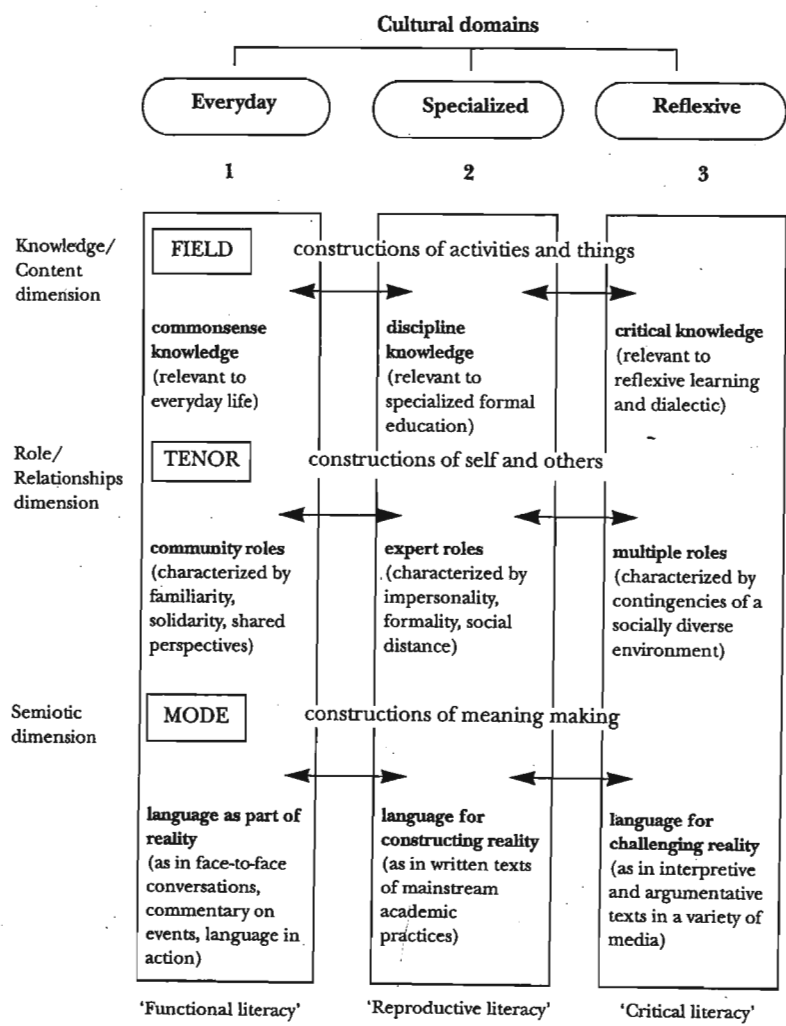
The everyday (domain 1) refers to the primary discourses (Gee 1990) that people develop, mainly through spoken language, in their interaction within their family and community. Learning takes place by doing things in the company of significant others as people are apprenticed into the shared knowledge and behaviours that are a part of being a member of a particular community or culture. In a multi-cultural, multilingual, and economically stratified society like South Africa it means that children bring a diversity of class, ethnic and gender beliefs to classrooms that will impact significantly on what happens in them. Domain 2 is primarily the domain of schooling where, in modern societies, learners need to gain access to dominant discourses through explicit formal education across disciplines. In the domain of specialised learning students can no longer rely on the commonsense understandings they acquired in their communities. They have to deal with the abstraction and objectification of everyday knowledge and how to produce context-independent texts that provide all the textual and content information for their interpretation. This induction into mainstream educational discourses requires conscious intervention by teachers. The third domain incorporates the diversity of modern society and the inevitably contesting discourses within it. Thus schooling, while providing access to mainstream educational discourses, can also introduce students to competing discourses. Macken-Horarik illustrates this with an example of students investigating in-vitro fertilisation and surrogacy. While students will explore this topic from a scientific point of view, they will also have to confront it in terms of their personal experience and deal with the legal and ethical issues (such as who is 'mother'?) that the subject generates. Students will thus experience knowledge as fluid and will have to learn how to construct texts that deal with, and negotiate through, conflicting points of view on issues. This will have to be learned through explicitly designed pedagogical strategies which will be characterised by openness, discussion and working with a variety of media. 'It will be more a pedagogy with a dialectic view, encouraging learners to move between competing perspectives and to learn to critique and synthesize these views for a range of purposes' (240)

Macken-Horarik develops the model further by synthesising the three cultural domains, the everyday, the specialised and the reflexive with the categories of field, tenor, mode. As has been explained before, the construction of any text is shaped by these three dimensions and they correspond to three principal types of meaning in any text; the experiential, the interpersonal and

the textual. This can be summarised as follows:

- Field:** linked with knowledge/content dimension, activates experiential meaning selections.
- Tenor:** linked with role/relationships dimension, activates interpersonal meaning selections.
- Mode** linked to the semiotic dimension, activates textual meaning selections.

The diagram below represents the wider context of the cultural domains from the point of view of field, tenor and mode (241):



As the diagram illustrates, no matter what cultural domain learners are in they will: view meanings in terms of constructions of activities and things along the field dimension; deal with constructions of self and others along the tenor dimension; and be involved in constructions of semiosis in spoken or written language along the mode dimension (241). Thus, while texts are shaped by these three dimensions the kind of construction will depend on which cultural domain participants are in.

The arrows in the diagram indicate the relationship between learning in the different domains. In this model the primary domain of the teacher is located in the second. It also illustrates that what happens in the second domain depends on what has happened in the first, and how entry to the third domain will depend on what happens in the second. As learners in multicultural societies enter schooling with very different frames of reference, and interactional and literacy practices (Heath 1983, Bernstein 1996, Gee 1990), what teachers do with learners in their classrooms will depend on their understanding of these different starting points. The wide gap between the registers (primary discourses) many learners bring to the classroom, and those they need control of in educational settings, has been seen as a major reason for the failure of children from non-mainstream communities. Macken-Horarik, like Martin (1993), warns against responses which seek to make education more relevant to these learners by restricting students to the kinds of language and texts they are already familiar with in their everyday life. She calls this 'a pedagogy of benevolent inertia' (249). 'Reconstituting education as a variant of everyday learning ... denigrates the functional value of this kind of learning in its cultural context, and effectively strands students in a school version of commonsense knowledge' (243).

Macken-Horarik's conceptualisation explicitly delineates the primary instructional task of all teachers across disciplines, namely, to enable learners to operate effectively in the academic registers of these disciplines. This requires that teachers help learners understand the differences between the meaning requirements of everyday learning and that of educational learning. As argued before, this will only be achieved by taking account of the different starting points that learners bring to the classroom (what they know) in order to clear paths to specialised knowledge. This process will move learners from the largely spoken functional literacy of their communities to the mainly written reproductive literacy of the second domain. Here teachers need to enable

learners to produce writing across disciplines that will be respected and acceptable to the gatekeepers of those disciplines. At the same time the specialised knowledge of the classroom interfaces with the learning of the outside world. This interface can be used by teachers to problematise educational learning and lead students into the reflexive domain. Macken-Horarik argues that the extent to which learners can successfully engage in reflexive action (analysis and critique) depends on how well they have engaged with the field of a discipline in the domain of specialised knowledge (249). In observation of two teachers in classrooms she found this implicit sequencing, from the everyday to the reflexive, in their pedagogic practices.

These involved, first, helping students to shunt between the understandings developed previously either through their everyday world, or through earlier classroom work, and those relevant to the field as construed in the discipline. Secondly, more critical perspectives were encouraged (*vis a vis* reading and writing) once these same students were familiar with these specialized knowledge requirements and could draw on them in a consideration of contemporary issues surrounding the field of study (245).

In a further development of her contextual model Macken-Horarik looks at the different domains from the point of view of the genres that are predominantly found in each domain. The following adapted diagram illustrates the genre and their typical contexts of use (246).

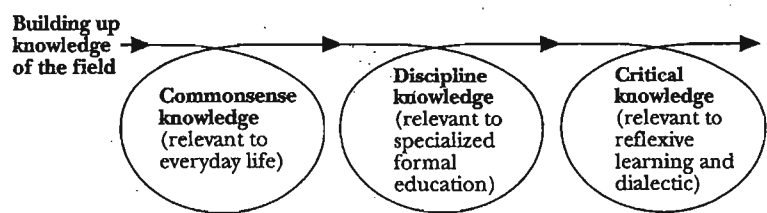
Cultural domains

Everyday	Specialised	Reflexive
1	2	3
Instruction (e.g. 'Information for IVF patients') Observation (e.g. 'The Sydney night sky') Anecdote (e.g. 'What happened to my family last week') Personal response (e.g. 'My favourite television program') Commentary (e.g. 'How this experiment is performed')	Report (e.g. 'The IVF program at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital') Explanation (e.g. 'How do we get day and night?') Literature (canonic) (e.g. 'Hamlet') Deconstruction (e.g. 'The generic features of the sit com') Procedure (e.g. 'Write up of an experiment')	Discussion (e.g. 'Do the costs of IVF outweigh the benefits?') Theory (e.g. 'Theories about the birth of the solar system') Literature (Post-modern) (e.g. 'Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead') Critique (e.g. 'How do sit coms reinforce stereotypes about the aged?') Evaluation (e.g. 'Evaluation of an experimental design')
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonsense knowledge • Community roles • Language as part of reality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline knowledge • Expert roles • Language for constructing reality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflexive knowledge • Multiple roles • Language for challenging reality

The diagram shows that genres of report, explanation, literary text, deconstruction, and procedure are all genres used to distance learners from their everyday experience and commonsense knowledge which are commonly realised through other genres, such as anecdote and personal response that are listed in the domain of the everyday. Furthermore, in order to enter the reflexive domain successfully learners would have to develop control of genres which are used to challenge and subvert reality.

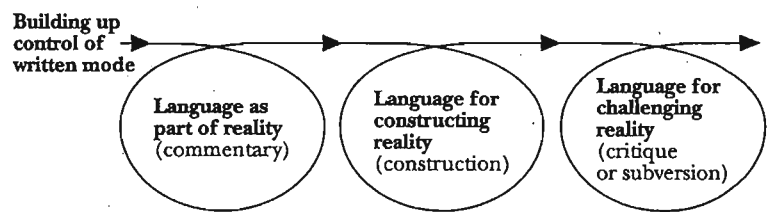
The implications of this approach for pedagogy are developed on the basis of two hypotheses. The first is that in order to use language to challenge reality learners first need to control the language for constructing reality. The second is that any learning environment can be explored from the point of view of its field, its tenor or its mode. The following diagrams (248) contextualise developmental processes and clearly illustrate what is required of teachers to enhance their learners' understanding of the field dimension and their control of the written mode across the

three domains:



Questions to consider

- What is the nature of the speciality into which I want to initiate my students?
- What steps do I take to move students into understanding privileged within the discipline?
- How do I help my students to use this knowledge base to dialogue with other discourses and to view knowledge construction as open to question?



Questions to consider

- Which modes and media do we need to utilize at different stages of this work?
- Which genres are going to help students move into both specialized and reflexive perspectives on this subject in this unit of work?
- What metalanguage do students need to control at different stages of this work?

The diagrams illustrate that along the field dimension teachers will have to determine where their pupils start in relation to the specialised knowledge of the discipline they are inducting learners into. Similarly, they will have to make decisions as to exactly how they are to introduce children to contending discourses that question the specialised knowledge they have developed. Along the mode dimension they would have to consider what texts should be employed to build their learners' meaning-making potential. Typically, access to students' existing knowledge would most often be done through classroom talk, whereas dealing with the technicality and abstraction of discipline knowledge would require reading and writing. The development of critical literacy would necessarily require an exploration of a range of competing voices such as newspaper and magazine articles and TV programmes. This model succinctly and explicitly demonstrates what steps teachers need to take in order to develop control of empowering literate practices. It shows that 'pedagogical choices for different modes, media and genres will differ depending on whether students are engaging with a specialized "field" for the first time, are already into it or are beginning to question some of the assumptions on which it is based' (Macken-Horarik 1996: 250). An illustration of this model in action is provided by a description of a teacher exploring in-vitro

fertilisation. Students deal first with texts which are close to their everyday experience such as a pamphlet on *Information for IVF patients* probably after oral discussion and other activities around the issue. They then move into texts which generalise experience such as *The IVF program at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital*. Once they have control of these genres they then explore contesting experiences of IVF through appropriate genres such as *Do the costs of IVF outweigh the benefits?*.

To sum up, Macken-Horarik's contextual model has many strengths that draw together into a coherent pedagogical framework the themes of access, inclusion and critical action that have permeated this chapter. These strengths are summarised below.

- The model provides a clear analysis of the way the different domains interrelate and thereby provides a rationale for the sequencing of pedagogy accordingly. It provides a powerful alternative to 'a pedagogy of benevolent inertia' by foregrounding the necessity of building critical capacity through explicit teaching of the genres and language of specialised knowledge.
- It offers a vision of what it means to teach language across the curriculum. The application of the categories of field, tenor and mode can be applied to each discipline to make explicit the specific literacy demands they place on learners. These categories can be revisited and reconstituted as learners move into the reflexive domain thus allowing critical structural and linguistic comparisons to be made across genres and discourses. Furthermore, the interface between disciplines and learning domains can be examined to determine what genres are conventionally privileged there.
- It allows teachers to view their subjects as a specialised domain of educational knowledge which interacts backwards with the specific community and everyday knowledge learners bring to the classroom, and forwards to the demands and critical perspectives that the world outside the classroom brings to bear on their educational knowledge. Thus, while teachers apprentice learners into the fields of different disciplines, they can enable learners to see this educational knowledge from the perspective of the layperson, the expert and the critic.
- By application of the categories of field, tenor and mode teachers are able to develop a

sense of what they want their learners to achieve - 'they can view the territory they want the students to cover in terms of the meanings they will need to make' (Macken-Horarik 1996: 273). This will help teachers understand the degrees of complexity being demanded of learners as they move along the continuum away from their known worlds. It will also enable teachers to make principled choices about what texts are appropriate for the students to read and write in order to build field knowledge and to guide them towards producing texts that are 'respected' in the field.

- The model emphasises the need for a metalanguage to enable effective teacher/student and teacher/teacher communication, the latter being especially important for language across the curriculum initiatives. A metalanguage allows for more effective assessment and conferencing around student writing as criteria thus become more explicit and available to the student.
- The authoritative role of the teacher in initiating learners into the written mode is foregrounded in the model. This makes it appropriate and flexible for working with students from a multiplicity of backgrounds. Strategies like oral discussion which builds field knowledge and begins to model the writing students will be required to do, explicit modelling and analysis of texts, and negotiation around established criteria, provide crucial scaffolding experiences. They enable learners to move from oral modes to the abstraction of written modes as well as initiating them into educational learning.
- The model allows for structured decision-making about course content, sequencing and teaching. In relation to their subject it enables teachers to think clearly about 'the modes of discourse through which it is mediated, the roles students need to take up in classroom interaction, the prerequisite knowledge they need to understand certain concepts, or the genres through which this knowledge is communicated' (274). This in turn allows teachers to make principled decisions about what should happen at different stages of the teaching process, for example, whether they need to build up learners' field knowledge or work explicitly on the generic structure of texts that students need to write.
- Finally the model allows teachers to evaluate their teaching. They are able to assess what learners have achieved over a programme of work and consequently evaluate their teaching in the light of this information. For example, if learners' written texts are weak teachers can examine how they taught the particular generic structure or whether they

spent enough time on it.

Macken-Horarik's contextual model builds on and significantly extends the approach to the teaching of writing developed by Callaghan et al (1993). While they both share a concern for moving from the concrete to greater degrees of abstraction in the teaching and learning process, the contextual model provides a more integrated account of the interface across domains and how this impacts on teaching. They also share a common concern with ensuring that the genres arise from the tasks or content to be explored and that the focus should be on the relationship between knowledge, texts and grammar. Macken-Horarik, however, provides a more explicit framework for how this might be accomplished and what decision-making guidelines teachers can follow in the development of programmes that will lead learners through the different domains in a pedagogically principled sequence.

The model also provides an important response to criticisms levelled at genre-based approaches and the pedagogical responses that stem from them, particularly the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (POM) of the NLG. Firstly, in comparison to the POM, which relegated genre to a minor role, the contextual model reasserts the central role of genre in the development of both specialised and reflexive knowledge and competences. Macken-Horarik's model explicitly foregrounds 'the meanings which are privileged in a given learning context' (275), and this contextual knowledge enables teachers to choose the kinds of reading and writing they want students to do on clear pedagogical grounds. These text types will facilitate particular kinds of learning (meaning potential) which students need to develop for themselves through a variety of genres. Secondly, while the specialised domain of the contextual model corresponds to the overt instruction stage of the POM, it is given a far more central role in the former. Macken-Horarik argues that the successful development of critical literacy in any field will depend on how thoroughly learners have engaged with it in the specialised domain. This centrality of what is essentially the domain of schooling is not present in the POM. Finally, like the POM, Macken-Horarik's contextual model focuses on the importance of developing reflective practice. The POM's transformed practice is presented as a return to situated practice where the pedagogic process began with the lived experience of the students. It is seen as a process whereby the discourses of marginalised communities are reexamined and brought into the mainstream in a way that challenges and

transforms hegemonic discourses. The contextual model pays careful attention to the role of everyday learning in the process of moving learners to a position where they 'can begin to be reflexive in understanding both self and other' (277). However, it focuses on the means of giving students access to discourses and genres outside the educational arena, such as newspapers, magazines and other media, through which society contests the knowledge of the everyday and specialised domains. It emphasises the need to incorporate different points of view about a learning context, to

... build into it not just the pedagogic view of the teacher and what is to be taught, but also that of the learner and how this relates to what is already learnt. But we also need to see the possibilities of the context, the 'yet to be voiced' (Bernstein 1986) readings which are at the margins of society and which challenge the hegemonic views of both 'required knowledge' and the commonplace views of 'tacit understandings' (277).

2.3 Assessment and Response

The final area of methodology that needs to be investigated is assessment of, and response to, student writing. Genre-based approaches have stressed the necessity of mediating learning by providing scaffolds that open learners to the 'zone of proximal development' (Vygotsky 1978). This mediated learning allows learners to go beyond the boundaries of independent learning. A crucial aspect of mediation/scaffolded learning in the area of writing pedagogy is that of assessment. Zamel (1985) stressed the need for response behaviours that established a collaborative relationship between teacher and student writer; responded to writing as work in progress; focussed on meaning and macro-structure issues first; and gave explicit strategies to writers to help them out of communicative problems. Hyland (1992) argues that the genre approach creates the possibility of constructive assessment as it provides the 'objective criteria for precise and constructive evaluation' (17). These criteria enable teachers to provide positive feedback and strategies for improvement on the basis of an explicit understanding of text requirements.

Macken and Slade (1993) develop a detailed description of genre-based assessment practices and the principles which guide them. They criticise traditional and progressivist assessment practices

for particular shortcomings which they argue genre approaches respond to. Traditional practices are criticised on the basis that they are norm-referenced. Students are marked relative to each other, criteria for assessment are unclear, and marks are allocated on the intuitions of the teacher. This gives learners little understanding of their shortcomings and how to rectify them. Progressivist assessment practices are seen as inadequate because of their decontextualised notion of learning processes. Their emphasis on mental skills and capacities such as reasoning, problem solving and critical thinking divorces 'the context of knowledge ... from considerations of the language processes in which content comes into being' (Macken and Slade 1993: 209). This separation of skills from the language in which they are encoded results in vague criteria focussed on learning skills and processes which do not provide clear guidance in how, for example, the ability to reason is conventionally encoded in characteristic language patterns.

Macken and Slade maintain that in order to be effective, assessment practices need to be linguistically principled, criterion-referenced, diagnostic, formative, and finally summative. This means that assessment needs to be based on explicit criteria against which students' writing and language performance can be evaluated. They argue that systemic functional linguistics offers a model of language that provides a contextualised view of language. It enables explicit criteria to be developed that are contextually and linguistically informed and provides teachers with the tools to systematically relate purpose and audience to language itself. Elsewhere in this chapter it has been demonstrated how a text is shaped by four environmental/contextual factors, namely, genre, tenor, field and mode which are relevant to the interpretation and production of a text and thus its evaluation. Genres are shaped by the social purposes of their users which, through repetition in a culture, stabilise over time and become conventionalised means of achieving these purposes. As a result these conventional, socially constructed genres reveal their different purposes in their overall structure. A narrative will be structured differently to an exposition to achieve the different social purposes. The link between the three aspects of register (context of situation) field, tenor and mode and corresponding ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings enables a systematic description of the interaction between text and context. A text can be seen as integrating three kinds of meaning in response to three functional and contextual pressures, with genre combining these meanings in ways allowable in a culture. In relation to evaluation, these four contextual dimensions enable teachers to relate the purpose of text to its conventional structural and

linguistic realisations. Teachers can develop guidelines and criteria around the structure of a genre and the linguistic patterns that are conventionally employed to achieve a particular social purpose. This is illustrated by Butt et al (1998: 147):

Structural features		Grammatical features
Position statement	<p>A GOOD TEACHER</p> <p>A good teacher needs to be understanding to all children.</p>	Human or non-human participants
Justification of argument (series of arguments supported by evidence)	He or she must also be fair and reasonable. The teacher must work at a sensible pace and not one thing after another. The teacher also needs to speak with a clear voice so the children can understand. If the children have worked hard during the week there should be some fun activities.	<p>Present tense</p> <p>Conjunctions showing reasons and conditions</p> <p>Modality</p> <p>Material, mental and relational processes</p>
Summary (restatement of position recommendation)	That's what I think a good teacher should be like.	

Macken and Slade use the four contextual dimensions to develop explicit criteria for the evaluation of different genres. They transform each aspect of the context into ‘probes’ which can guide assessment for different writing tasks.

Genre	Does the text reveal a clear sense of purpose? Is it well organised into stages?
Tenor	Does the text construct a consistent reading position for the reader? How well does the writer exploit the interpersonal resources of the grammar in this task?
Field	Does the text project a coherent ‘possible world’? How well does the writer exploit the ideational resources of the grammar in this task?
Mode	Is the text cohesive? How well does the writer exploit the textual resources of the grammar in this task?

(Macken and Slade 1993: 228)

These basic probes can be translated into a fine grained analysis of a particular text type. Macken and Slade (229) provide an example for assessing scientific report writing which is adapted below.

Purpose: Classifying and Describing Phenomena

Generic staging: General Classification followed by Description

Tenor: Growth of Objectivity in Report Writing

Interpersonal Resources: Interaction between interlocutors

- Non-interactant subjects; generic participants; impersonal.
- Non-attitudinal; rather than expression of personal feelings.
- Non-modalised, untagged declarative.

Field: Moving from Commonsense to Technical Knowledge

Ideational resources: Representation of experience

- Information selected from the field - classifying, grading, measuring and describing phenomena.
- Clauses - relational; material.
- Lexis or use of technical terms where relevant, building up lexical taxonomies.
- Use of language which extends, enhances and elaborates on the information (clause complex).
- Verbal and nominal groups - generalised Events (time) and Participants (reference); consistent use of present tense.

Mode: Creating a Context-Independent Text for the Reader via Text

Textual resources: Presentation as text

- Constructing its own context. Reference inside rather than outside text.
- Integrating clauses within the sentence and appropriate punctuation.
- Monologic - topical themes; progression through these.

The contextual model outlined above provides the tools for effective assessment practices. It is criterion-referenced in that it links the purpose of a text to the conventional structural and linguistic realisations that are employed to achieve that purpose. This enables teachers to make clear to learners exactly what is required of them in the production of different texts. It is diagnostic and formative as teachers are able to use the criteria to pinpoint problem areas in learners' writing and provide them with specific strategies to overcome their difficulties. Lastly, teachers are able to provide a clearer rationale for their final summative assessment based on the established criteria. I have used this approach to develop self-evaluation questions for first-year university students writing academic argument. These are presented in a preliminary form in

2.4 Implications for the Research Process

To conclude this chapter it remains to link the insights gained from the review to the research process. Firstly, the above literature review reveals certain characteristics of effective literacy education against which school and classroom practices can be evaluated. It would seem that a writing programme which aimed to provide ‘equality of access to cultural and economic resources’ (Luke 1994: 47) would have the following features:

- A focus on the development of a confidence-building and risk-taking environment where learners’ confidence in the value and worth of their own discourses (voices) and experiences is encouraged. Swales (1990) describes this as ‘soft process’ and Lindfors as ‘freewriting’ where students are ‘protected from the exigencies of external criteria for evaluating their written products’ and where learners are focussed on the ‘internal aspects of composing’ and communication rather than on form in the exploration of topics of their own choosing and interest (220). An activity which would fall into this category would be dialogue journal writing.
- Conscious attention to strategies for effective writing such as invention strategies (Spack 1984); methods of planning; redrafting and editing to create an awareness of writing as a process of refinement.
- Explicit teaching of the relationship between the social purposes of texts and their conventional structural and linguistic realisations. This would involve: modelling exemplar texts of the different genres; establishing criteria for the effective communication of the different social purposes; and drafting and redrafting texts to meet the established criteria. An appropriate methodology would involve learners in exploring themes which encourage the production of multigeneric texts. This would sensitise students both to the different demands of different modes of communication, for example, between oral and written texts, and to the way in which different purposes and audiences impact on the structure and language of a text in systematic ways.

- Content which gives learners an experience of a wider range of genres to take them beyond the confines of narrative/expressive writing and to give them access to academic and occupational genres. This process should start students working from familiar genres such as narrative and moving to those more removed from their immediate experience, such as analytical exposition (Prince 1989).
- Assessment practices which encourage collaborative relationship amongst teachers. They should be linguistically principled, criterion-referenced and thereby diagnostic and formative as well as summative. This Macken and Slade (1993) maintain is accomplished by making clear the linguistic and structural criteria by which social/communicative purposes are achieved in different genres. They feel that systemic functional linguistics offered a systematic way of relating matters of purpose and audience to language. By attention to the four interrelated aspects of the environment of text, teachers and learners will be able to develop explicit criteria and an assessment metalanguage. This will assist students in the process of writing for real purposes (academic and occupational) and understanding the appropriate linguistic criteria for doing so. It will also enable teachers to diagnose problems and offer specific strategies for their resolution.
- Principled and structured decision-making about course content and sequencing based on clear understanding of the interface between the domains of the everyday, the specialised and the reflexive and how each one builds on the other. This understanding highlights the particular responsibility of teachers to build on the primary discourses of learners in developing their ability to function in the specialised domain of educational learning. This in turn provides the basis for the development of critical literacy.
- The development of a critical social literacy whereby learners are taken beyond the domain of educational learning and introduced to the genres of the world outside which contest both their everyday and specialised knowledge. This could lead learners to reevaluate the relationship between dominant and marginalised discourses.

The insights gained from the literature review also provide guidelines for the data that needs to be gathered in the research process if one is to gain an understanding of the teaching of writing in a school and the factors that have shaped that teaching. To do this one would need to gain an understanding of:

- the range of genres learners had experienced in their school careers across the curriculum, how these were taught and assessed, and what the rationale was for these practices;
- how language was taught and how it related to the teaching of writing;
- the quantity of extended writing students did over a school year;
- student attitudes towards writing and the reasons for these attitudes;
- the knowledge and skills around writing students that have developed;
- the knowledge, skills and attitudes teachers had developed around writing and how these impacted on the way writing was taught;
- how far students had been taken across the continuum from the everyday to the reflexive;
- the messages about the teaching of writing that filtered down from the education system via official documents such as syllabuses, examinations, and subject guides;
- the impact of political, educational, social, and economic factors on the lives of the learners, on the school environment and on the teaching practices within it.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: CAPTURING LEARNERS' LITERACY EXPERIENCES

My research topic is an ethnographic investigation into the teaching of writing in an urban African (ex-DET) school in the Pietermaritzburg area. This research arose out of an awareness of unequal outcomes emanating from the different education systems operating in South Africa. My own teaching of Black students on the Pietermaritzburg campus, as well as my reading of Martin (1989, 1993), Cope and Kalantzis (1993a,b), Bernstein (1996), Christie (1995), Gee (1990) and Johnson (1991), had made me aware that access to power in society (the ability to act *on* one's environment) is closely linked to access to a range of written genres. Students I was teaching seemed to have had little experience of genres that were crucial to their success at university and in wider society. A central aim of this research therefore was to understand all the factors that impact on the teaching of writing in the school context that I explored. This would enable me to provide some explanation for the unequal outcomes I was experiencing. These aims, I felt, would best be served by ethnographic research methods and thus this chapter begins by analysing and describing the nature of ethnographic research methods and establishing their appropriateness to my research area. This is followed by a description of the community and school in which the research took place. After establishing the principal research method, and the research site, a history of the research process follows and the issues and problems that arose in the research context are described. Responses to these problems and adjustments to research methods are explained. The rationale for the decisions taken are developed by reference to relevant literature around these research issues. It is in the description of the research history that Literate Life Histories (LLHs) are explored as a means of ethnographic data collection. LLHs form the central core of the data collected, and the rationale for their use as well as the issues and problems surrounding their use are examined. In addition, the chapter describes the process of triangulation of various sources of data such as:

- classroom observation;
- interviews with teachers;
- participant observation of matriculation examinations;

- examination of syllabuses and other official documents; and
- analysis of student work.

These methods are to be evaluated in terms of their ability to provide an understanding of the factors that impact on the learning and teaching of writing in the context of the school that I investigated, as well as on their ability to provide insights on questions of equity and access that were mentioned in chapters one and two. This last concern emphasises the inherently critical nature of ethnographic description. It 'does not take any given customary reality for granted' (Erickson 1988: 1807) and exposes what is 'hidden' to those who might have invested in certain practices.

3.1 The Nature of Ethnographic Research

In order to explore the teaching of writing at the school and its impact on students' literate development, my research needs to establish:

- how both teachers and pupils conceptualise the task of writing;
- what sort of importance they place on it relative to other activities;
- how they go about teaching and doing it, and what this says about the way they conceptualise it;
- and what factors shape their attitudes towards, and conceptualisations of, writing.

A deep understanding of these aspects of a situation would inevitably require in-depth and long-term involvement in the context of the school and an ethnographic approach to the research seemed most appropriate.

Watson-Gegeo (1988) defines ethnographic research as 'the study of people's behaviour in naturally occurring, ongoing settings, with a focus on the *cultural interpretation* (my emphasis) of behaviour' (576). Ethnography could thus be described as both *qualitative* and *naturalistic*. It is qualitative in that its central aim is to reveal the nature and distinguishing features of people's behaviour rather than measuring it, as is the case with quantitative research. It is naturalistic because it implies observation of people in the places where they normally live, work and play

and not in settings set up specifically for the purposes of research. However, describing ethnography as qualitative and naturalistic does not give a complete description of its nature. Watson-Gegeo's definition focuses on 'cultural interpretation' and this is echoed by other commentators on ethnography. Wolcott (1987) states that its purpose 'is to describe and interpret cultural behaviour' (43). It is this conception of culture as 'integral to the analysis' (Watson-Gegeo 1988: 577) that commentators feel distinguishes ethnography from other forms of qualitative research.

The second aspect of ethnography highlighted by Watson-Gegeo's definition at the beginning of the last paragraph concerns *interpretation*. This implies that ethnography is more than good description, and that a focus on culture requires ethnographers to make sense of what they have observed. Hammersley (1994) states that the 'analysis of data involves interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions' (2). Wolcott argues that an ethnographer's task requires going beyond chronicling events to developing a '*theory of cultural behaviour*' (1987: 41). The ethnographer must be actively engaged in developing this theory by inferring it from the words and actions of the people being studied. This raises an issue about how one accounts for the role of the interpreter's own personal history in the process of interpretation: 'if there are no innocent texts, there are no privileged interpretations' (Thomas 1995:18). Pierce (1995), drawing from the work of critical educational and ethnographic researchers such as Weiler (1988) and Simon and Dippo (1986), believes that the personal histories of researchers cannot be separated from the process of interpretation (the production of knowledge). This she feels should be made explicit, and illustrates this point in a description of her personal experience of doctoral research into the natural learning experiences of five immigrant women in Canada. She describes how she was an active participant in the study, and how she was aware that her own history, experience and identity 'intersected in diverse and complex ways with the progress of the research' (Pierce 1995: 573).

To achieve the ethnographic goal of providing 'a descriptive and interpretive-explanatory account' (Watson-Gegeo 1988: 577) of a group's behaviour in a given context, implies long-term, systematic and holistic observation. The necessity for holistic observation is because any event or behaviour needs to be described and analysed in relation to the whole system of which it is a

part, as an integrated not as an isolated phenomenon. For my research topic it was necessary to understand how the learning and teaching of writing in the classrooms of an urban ex-DET school is embedded in increasingly larger contexts such as the school, the education and examination system, the community in which the school is located, and the wider society. My research also needed to uncover how these different contexts impact on the learning and teaching of writing and provide explanations for the outcomes in that particular school context. As mentioned in the introduction, I did my research by working in the school for two and a half years teaching a standard nine class each year, and continued my contact with the school up to the present time. An holistic understanding of what shapes the teaching and learning of writing in those classrooms required seeing those processes in relation to the relevant micro- and macro-contextual layers in which they are embedded.

The above broad description of the nature of ethnographic research needs to be deepened by an explanation of important principles which underlie such an approach. Firstly, a cornerstone of ethnography is the attempt to elicit the participants' understandings of the contexts in which they are observed and of their behaviour in those contexts. This is referred to as an *emic* analysis or description. It tries to uncover the ways in which participants interpret behaviour, events and situations in order to acquire a knowledge of categories and rules they must know in order to operate in the context being studied. Investigating behaviour in its own terms, as described above, also means that the perspectives and interpretations of participants in the context/s being investigated are incorporated in the descriptive language they themselves employ. For example, as far as my research is concerned I have used literate life histories (which will be discussed later in this chapter) as a means of gaining pupils' perspectives and experience of the learning and teaching of writing in the community and school I have investigated. Thus hopefully I will be able to record their perceptions in their words, which will be clearly distinct from my interpretation of their words. These literate life histories (LLHs) from the pupils were collected by means of interviews and it is important that they were 'carried out so as to promote the unfolding of emic cultural knowledge in its most heuristic, *natural* form' (Spindler and Spindler 1987: 19). In addition, information was gathered by interviewing teachers about their literate histories, teacher training and experience of teaching in the school, as well as by observing teachers in their classrooms. This information is linked to an analysis of syllabuses and other official documents

in order to understand how these impact on perceptions of writing and how it is taught. The multilayered nature of the data collected would require an understanding that there would be differences in attitudes and conceptualisation between teachers and pupils and within these two groups.

Another aspect of investigating behaviour in its own terms is that one aims to capture 'the *local meanings* that happenings have for the people involved in them' (Erickson, 1986:p.121-2). This means that one should aim to find the meanings that are particular to the set of individuals who use these meanings as well as particular to the moment of their use. My LLHs should therefore be able to capture what essay writing means to the pupils that I have interviewed ie what meaning they give to it as well as being sensitive to the fact that experiences may vary across pupils and across time as new knowledge or input affects individuals' attitudes and perceptions.

A further principle of ethnographic research which Watson-Gegeo emphasises is that it is 'concerned with group rather than individual characteristics because cultural behaviour is by definition shared behaviour'(1988: 577). So while the ethnographer might be concerned with the individual and observing individual behaviour, it will be for the purpose of investigating what an individual's behaviour has to say about group perceptions and behaviour. Thus the perceptions of, and attitudes towards, writing that the LLHs of individual pupils reveal will be significant in terms of what they reveal about the prevailing attitudes and perceptions of the group they represent. However, commentators state that when it comes to the task of describing and interpreting cultural behaviour, then the direct representation of the participants' view of reality (emic analysis) cannot stand on its own (Spindler and Spindler 1987: 4). Watson-Gegeo states that an emic analysis precedes an *etic* analysis which translates the emic analysis into a form and vernacular understandable to a wider audience (such as social scientists), which would allow for useful comparisons across languages, settings and cultures (1988: 579). The ethnographer thus attempts to develop a theory of the setting under study (in my case how writing is taught and learned in a particular school) and then to generalise, through etic analyses, to other settings studied in a particular way. As mentioned before, an important motivation behind this study has been the question of the link between the teaching and learning of writing and access to wider realms of social action and power. This is particularly pertinent in the context of South African

education where separate education systems have legally existed until 1996 with very unequal provision and outcomes across those systems. *De facto* huge differences still exist across schools and the vast majority of pupils in South Africa will school in a context similar to the one in this study; an under resourced environment where the pupils and teachers are not mother-tongue speakers of English (in this case Zulu speakers). Teachers in these schools are generally less qualified than teachers in other schools. Their practice will reflect their training and the 'traditions' of practice that have developed in those schools and in the particular school that is the subject of this study. An ethnographic study of the teaching and learning practices surrounding writing in a particular school will enable useful comparisons with other schools in South Africa and elsewhere. It could also provide useful insights around the issues of power and access that could inform the content and practice of teaching writing in other contexts.

The above discussion on etic analysis indicates that ethnographic research is both *comparative* and *critical*. It is comparative in that it seeks to make generalisations about behaviour across particular situations, for example, across school-based practices of teaching writing in different school contexts. It is also thus 'inherently critical' (Erickson 1988: 1087) in that it seeks to uncover the 'customary reality' of everyday events which participants tend to take for granted. Erickson states that 'everyday life' is often invisible to the participants because it is so familiar 'we do not realize the pattern in our actions as we perform them' (ibid), and also because people have invested in this reality. Consequently they might not want to face its contradictions because this threatens established practice and power relations. An ethnographic approach would thus 'make the familiar strange and interesting again' (Erickson 1986: 121) and at the same time bring to the surface the hidden reality of everyday practices. This would enable one to bring comparative and critical reflection to bear on this customary reality. Ethnographic research achieves this through detailed and systematic study of a situation by both creating 'a descriptive and interpretive-explanatory account' (Watson-Gegeo 1988: 577), and by employing multiple sources of information to verify the interpretation of this reality. An ethnographic study of the customary practices surrounding the learning and teaching of writing in a standard nine class in a school should uncover the hidden factors, assumptions, values, and attitudes driving these practices. This would allow informed critical reflection on those practices which could have implications for curriculum reform in a number of contexts and educational levels such as matriculation

examinations, teacher training, and school syllabuses.

The issue of the generalisability of ethnographic research findings raises a number of issues surrounding research methods, triangulation of data, and the use of quantitative data. Heath (1983) expresses it very clearly:

"So what?" is a question sometimes asked of the detailed descriptions provided by anthropologists of minutiae. To what extent is material and the sense of a particular phenomenon developed for one social group generalizable to other social groups? The same question can certainly be asked of studies of a single school or classroom or situation within a formal educational setting (41).

Commentators such as Lazaraton (1995) and Watson-Gegeo (1988) point to the need for triangulation of data and the use of quantitative methods, both to validate findings in regard to the implicit rules surrounding participants' behaviour in a situation, and also to meet requirements of generality and comparison across classroom contexts. Triangulation refers to the juxtaposition of data from different sources and different research methods such as participant-observation, interviewing and surveys, and is seen as crucial in the development of valid findings in ethnographic work. However, Lazaraton (1995) makes the point that quantification per se does not ensure generalisability to other contexts and that this is always a problem in ethnographic research. It is often focused on a particular group in a particular situation, and on understanding the implicit rules that govern that group's behaviour in that situation. She also warns that issues of research methodology are 'also issues about legitimacy and power' (465). She cites the political reality of the differences in access to generalisable data between teachers on the one hand and researchers on the other, and that we cannot divorce this reality from arguments about rigorous research.

As far as my research is concerned my central core of data comes from literate life history interviews with standard nine pupils that I taught. This is triangulated with data from a number of different sources collected in different ways. The following sources of data were used:

- I collected data from marking matriculation English examination papers identifying the range of genres represented in the examination; quantifying the students' choice of topics

in the examination; and gaining first hand knowledge about the criteria employed in the assessment of the essays. The purpose of this was to try and see what 'messages' were likely to have come down from the examination for both teachers and pupils about what was considered important and relevant in essay writing. This, I felt, would provide some explanation for the teaching and writing practices I was encountering, both in the classes I taught, and in the school as a whole.

- Participant-observation of classes also took place to see how writing was taught and what sort of writing activities pupils were involved in. This took the form of observation of individual lessons and also by following a class around from lesson to lesson over a number of different school days. I was thus able to quantify the amount of writing done, observe what sort of writing they did, and record how they were expected to approach the different writing tasks by the teacher.
- Another source of data was the syllabus guides, teacher schedules and other guidelines sent by the education department. These had a bearing on how teachers view their tasks and revealed what expectations there were of them from education authorities.
- Lastly I analysed pupils' essays on different tasks to gain insights into their understanding of the linguistic and structural task demands of different genres. Thus I felt that I had gathered information from a number of sources using different methods and that this would give me a valid and comprehensive 'descriptive and interpretive-explanatory account' (Watson-Gegeo 1988) of the learning and teaching of writing in the context that I was investigating.

A final principle of ethnographic research that needs to be considered is the role of theory in the research process. While the aim of investigating behaviour in its own terms and collecting participants' perceptions in their own descriptive language might seem conducive to a totally inductive process, it is important to realise that a prior theoretical framework is important to direct the 'researcher's attention to certain aspects of situations and certain kinds of research questions' (Ibid: 578). The role of theory is to guide observation in terms of the kinds of evidence that will be significant in providing answers to research questions. However, induction, intuition and 'extensive firsthand presence' (Erickson 1986: 140) are vital and allow research questions and processes to be modified during the ongoing process of data collection. Theory helps

ethnographers to direct their research efforts and to evaluate the significance of answers to 'research questions posed at the beginning of the study and developed while in the field' (Watson-Gegeo 1988: 578).

3.2 Research Methodology and its Evolution

Having established the appropriacy of ethnographic research methods to my investigation and explored the basic principles of ethnography, it is important to describe the research site in which the research took place.

3.2.1 Research Site: Community and School

The community in which the school is located is situated within the boundaries of the municipality of Pietermaritzburg, approximately four kilometres from the city centre. It is a geographically distinct community lying on a strip of land bounded by a stream and the Umsunduzi river and is on the edge of an industrial area on the one side and, across the Umsunduzi, by the municipal waste dump and sewerage works. Originally it was one of the African townships established in terms of the 1923 Natives (Urban Areas) Act which made provision for residential segregation of urban areas which were to be the administrative responsibility of white local authorities. Its history and development was thus governed and shaped by the racially-based laws and decisions that were part of the fabric of South African society since Union in 1910. The decision of the siting of the township was taken despite opposition from those who were destined to live in it. Their main objections were the health hazards due to the proximity of the sewerage works. It was finally established in 1926 and by 1930 it had a population of 412. Initially it catered for "married natives not living on the premises of their employer" (Peel 1987: 38). In the 1930s and 40s the goal of the Town Council to develop a 'Model Village' saw the development of basic facilities such as schools, churches, health services, transport and recreation.

The Apartheid years saw a typical pattern of strengthened segregation and underdevelopment which often sparked violent protest from the community. In the 1950s the political ferment in the

rest of the country did not leave the township untouched. Issues around rent, overcrowding and living conditions became focal points of dissatisfaction and protest. By 1957 1091 houses had been built but the estimated need was 1600. Between 1956 and 1964 there was no further development of housing while the population increased by 77% (5800 to 10290) (Peel 1987: 128). Increases in rents, electricity and education in 1958 ultimately lead to riots and violence in August 1959 in the wake of the widespread disturbances in the rest of Natal. The school buildings were burnt down and the cost of replacing them was estimated at 23 000 pounds (Peel 1987: 140). The strengthening of Apartheid control saw the same issues recurring for the inhabitants of the townships. For example, in the period 1978 –1988 it was estimated that R4.50 per person per annum was spent by the government on upgrading this community, compared to R186.00 per person spent by the Pietermaritzburg City Council on the ‘Coloured’ community during the same period (Kirkpatrick 1994: 12). Community resistance around the administration of the community was prevalent in the 1980s as in many other townships in South Africa. In 1989 a joint working ‘Committee of 12’ residents was formed with community support and operated effectively in the township until the elections of the transitional local Council in 1996.

The result of this history is that there has been ad hoc and uncoordinated development in the township, limited investment, instability, unstable administration and limited integration into the urban fabric of Pietermaritzburg. The population of the township is estimated at somewhere between 12000 and 20000, the extent of the informal settlement in the township making it difficult to calculate accurate figures. There are 6-7 persons per household with very poor quality housing being the norm. A unique feature of the population is that a sample survey found a quarter of the population to be under twenty years of age compared to half for the rest of Kwazulu-Natal (KZN) although overcrowding in the primary schools puts some doubts on this survey. This figure has been attributed to violence in the township; tenants not being able to afford having children with them; landlords finding alternative accommodation for their children in order to rent out rooms; and poor facilities for the younger generation. Unemployment has been estimated at 30% with the age group between 20 and 35 being the most affected. 42.9 % of household members were not earning any income, with the average monthly income per household being R518 in 1994. Over half the population between 21 and 60 years had completed their matriculation year. Not many had attained tertiary qualifications: 14% between 21 and 60

had teaching diplomas while only 1% had university degrees. (Kirkpatrick 1994: 19-26).

The violent confrontations between United Democratic Front (UDF) supporters and Inkatha in the 1980s and early 1990s also affected this community, especially school going children (Gultig and Hart 1991). The community has a long history of support for the Congress movement and the UDF was thus strongly supported by the community when it was launched in the 1980s. The community successfully prevented any penetration of Inkatha support. However, the violence in other communities brought refugees from other communities both to live in the township and to go to school there. Some of the youths that fled to the township were supporters of the Azanian Students Movement (AZASM) affiliated to the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), a black consciousness aligned organisation. Trouble between these youths and the UDF aligned youth organisation of the community soon erupted into armed conflict between groupings in the late 1980s. Shootings happened outside school grounds, teachers were threatened and frequent school closures resulted. Various community attempts to resolve matters resulted in the AZASM youth being evicted from the township. These events understandably affected schooling and relations between pupils and staff. One teacher spoke of being wakened late at night by a party of school children with a stolen mathematics examination paper and being forced to work out answers even though he was not a mathematics teacher. He was threatened with his life if he revealed anything, and only revealed the incident to me in a dialogue journal ten years after the event.

The high school was established in 1949 after a primary school was built in 1930 and a separate infant school in 1946. It is an ex-Department of Education and Training (DET) administered school in what was designated a 'white' area, and thus has good basic provision of buildings and equipment. The buildings that were restored after the 1959 fires were further developed, the official opening of the modern extensions taking place in 1991. However, the relationship between the school and the poverty stricken community around it has not been good and frequent vandalism and theft of school property has occurred. Attempts by parents and school authorities to solve these problems met with little success until extensive work was done to erect security fencing and install other security measures. The school is not used by the community after school hours. This is indicative of the poor relations which seem to exist between community and school and the lack of ongoing community involvement in the school. Teachers complain of

parent apathy, poor attendance at meetings, and responses only when there is a crisis. Informal conversations with some community members indicated that they felt they were only consulted when there is a crisis. Pupils felt that when crisis meetings are called they are not consulted and the resolutions that might come from these meetings do not really respond adequately or appropriately to the problems which give rise to the crises. Another problem which has beset the school was the high turnover of principals. Since 1993 there have been three principals and long periods with various acting principals.

In 1993 there were 1076 pupils in the school in 26 class units with 32 teachers including the principal and deputy principal. The high failure rate is reflected in the number of class units per standard/grade: seven in grade 8 and grade 9, five in grade 10, four in grade 11, and three in grade 12. Despite this dropout rate numbers in grade 11 classes, depending on subject choices, were often over fifty. Teacher loads are also heavy with some teachers having to deal with over 250 pupils on a daily basis. The pupil numbers have gradually decreased (750 in 1999) through the movement of pupils to better resourced schools that were formerly designated for other population groups. A drastic change has occurred in the teaching staff which has dropped to 21 in 1999. There were three teachers considered to be 'in excess' who were not timetabled in. This has been the result of voluntary severance packages offered to teachers as well as redeployment of teachers to more poorly resourced schools. Teachers complain of having to teach subjects they were not trained for. These staff cuts come against a history of poor matriculation results over a number of years. In 1993 and 1994 the matriculation pass rate was 17% and 19% respectively. These have improved in 1995 to 54% but the record from then is alarming, for example, in 1996 (7%), 1997 (13%), 1998 (33%) and 1999 (25%) (Discussion at a crisis meeting of the school community).

In terms of resources the school provides a mixed picture. Many classes suffer from a shortage of textbooks although teachers maintain that sufficient textbooks were allocated to the school. According to the teachers, the reason for the shortage is that pupils lose them and do not replace them. Teachers respond by not issuing end-of-year reports unless all textbooks are returned but this seems to do little to retrieve the situation. While there is equipment in the science laboratory to conduct experiments, there is no provision for practical work in Biology. The school has also acquired twenty five computers although these have been stolen, and retrieved, on more than one

occasion!

To sum up, while the school is better resourced than many former DET and homeland schools, both rural and urban, it is still subject to all the effects of poverty. The community surrounding it is still very poor as figures of unemployment, household income and education levels indicate. Poverty manifests itself in many ways and affects what happens in the school environment. Teachers talk of a high number of single parent homes; of pupils having to contribute to household income by taking on part-time jobs; of informal business enterprises being run from homes, allowing little time or space for school work; of overcrowded homes and poor, unhealthy living conditions; and of high levels of crime especially in relation to drugs. Pupils show a high degree of apathy about school and school work. Absenteeism is high and there is always a significant drop in pupil numbers after the midday break. This can partly be attributed to the much publicised breakdown of a 'culture of learning' caused by the ongoing national crises and disruptions of schooling, and the localised political conflict mentioned earlier, that characterised schooling from the mid 1980s. However, a great deal of the apathy surrounding schooling is related to high levels of unemployment awaiting school leavers. Pupils spoke honestly about this dilemma in 1998 when they said that the entire matriculation class of the previous year was unemployed and wandering the streets of the township. These hardworking, concerned students felt that there was little option for them but to get involved in crime if they wanted to contribute to family income. It was difficult to respond to this dilemma.

3.2.2 Probing the Field and Developing the Research Process

The previous two sections established the basic principles and guidelines for effective ethnographic research, its relevance to this research topic, and the research site. What follows is a history detailing the evolution of the research process and the changes and development that occurred. This will effectively illustrate Erickson's (1986) and Watson-Gegeo's (1988) concerns that allow research questions and processes to be modified during the ongoing process of data collection (see page 79).

As mentioned before (see pages 1), my interest in this research area was first prompted by work

done by Martin (1989) in which he highlighted the way in which access to various genres was distributed unequally across the school population in Australian schools. He argued that this seriously affected certain pupils' (mainly working class and immigrant children) access to realms of social action and power. He investigated the way in which writing was taught and the genres that pupils had access to in their school career. He concluded that writing was not explicitly taught and that children were exposed to a narrow range of genres. This situation would favour those middle class pupils who already had the cultural capital that would allow them to gain control of important genres without explicit teaching. This situation seemed similar to my experience of South African education, and so I set out to gain first hand experience of the learning and teaching of writing in the least advantaged sector of the South African schooling system.

I decided that an ethnographic research process would be appropriate if I was to develop a rich understanding of all the factors that impact on the teaching and learning of writing in the context I had decided to explore. I chose a school in a community near Pietermaritzburg for a number of reasons. I was already well known in the school and community because of my work in a non-racial teachers' union, my involvement in cricket coaching and development, and through a number of teachers at the school that I had taught at university. I also knew the principal and other members of the community socially. Furthermore, the community was in easy travelling distance of both my work and my home.

I made a number of decisions based on the need to develop a relationship of trust with those I would be observing. Punch (1986) emphasised the necessity of a close relationship between researcher and researched as a distinctive characteristic of ethnographic research 'because the development of that relationship is subtly intertwined with both the outcome of the project and the nature of the data...Pivotal to the whole relationship between researcher and researched for instance is access and acceptance' (p12). Firstly, I decided to teach a class at the school because this would enable me to be seen, especially by the teaching staff, as more of a colleague than a researcher. This would help to establish my bona fides and allow me 'field entry' (Corsar 1983: 125). It would also help to overcome perceptions that I was obtaining a degree at the expense of others' time and effort. I decided to focus on and teach standard nine classes for a number of reasons. Firstly, I felt that they were the products of at least eleven years of schooling and would

thus reflect the attitudes, perceptions, approaches and skills inculcated by the schooling system they had experienced. Secondly, they would be easier to work with for research purposes because they would not yet be involved in the intense focus on examinations that matriculation pupils are.

I decided that initially I would not do any systematic research because I wanted to establish a relationship of trust with both pupils and teachers first, and because I needed to come to terms with the teaching demands of that class. One of the first things I did to help the process of building trust was to start a dialogue journal with my class. I wanted to use this to get to know the class and for them to get to know me. Initially I had thought to use them as a formal source of data, but the need for confidentiality and the students' desire to keep their journals changed these plans.

On the issue of trust it was significant that, in the first standard nine class that I taught, I was closely questioned by the pupils about my motivations for being there. They questioned whether I was receiving any extra pay for teaching in a 'black school'. This was a legacy of the past where white teachers received extra pay for teaching in black areas, a practice that was derisively described as 'getting danger money'. The perception was that many white teachers taught in the DET for extra pay and career advancement. This sort of background made it imperative that I put these sorts of suspicions to rest. The dialogue journals were useful in this situation and I was helped by the fact that I already knew and had worked with, and taught, some of the staff; I knew the principal; and I was already known by some in the community through my teacher union and cricket coaching activities. However, I was not known to all the staff and pupils and I felt that a gradual approach was necessary. This was confirmed when, after I had been there for two terms, I approached the principal about the possibility of observing classes. I then wrote a letter to the staff requesting permission to interview them and observe their classes. I felt that this would come across as officially approved and not as some arbitrary decision on my part. I asked for those teachers who were willing to contact me, but nobody did. As it turned out the official route was precisely the wrong way to go about it as it was seen as possibly connected to evaluation of their teaching. At an end-of-year social function in 1993, I broached the subject with the teachers I had got to know best and was welcomed with no sign of hesitation.

However, a number of problems emerged which forced a reconsideration of my plans and methods of data collection. Firstly, 1993 was a year in which there were major disruptions of schooling. The assassination of Chris Hani and a national teachers' strike caused protracted stayaways. In addition, several local community and school issues saw further disruptions of school time. These events affected data collection in a number of ways. Because of lost time both teachers and students understandably felt less inclined to spend time with me in interviews and having me observe classes. Teachers spent extra time in holidays trying to catch up with syllabus requirements. Furthermore, the lost time put more pressure on me to complete the syllabus with my own class, and I was also spending extra time with them over and above onerous university commitments. There was added pressure because students did not write internally set examinations, but had to write 'regional' examinations set by a teacher from within the circuit. Thus, while the decision to teach a class had advantages in terms of access and acceptance, it had disadvantages because of the pressure it put on the researcher's time, especially in the circumstances I have described. It became very difficult to involve students in activities which would deepen my understanding of the research issues I was exploring, when their priority was to finish their literature networks.

In addition, another problem arose around the need to gain some insights into the community literate practices and attitudes. This I felt would give me some understanding of the interface between school and community literate practices which would be an important factor in the teaching and learning of writing in the school I was researching. To help with this I engaged a Zulu-speaking fieldworker who I felt would be better able to gain access to community people outside the school. She was an experienced teacher, studying for a Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree on our campus, and was busy with a dissertation on the teaching of writing that I was supervising. However, changes in her personal and work circumstances curtailed the amount of time that she could devote to the work. This, together with the pressures on my time that I have already mentioned, forced me to abandon this approach after only two unsuccessful pilot interviews had been completed.

Thus, by the end of 1993 I had little to show:

- I had been able to observe the writing practices of my own pupils in a limited range of tasks;
- I had some understanding of my pupils' lives and circumstances and the issues which interested them. An important source of information in this regard had been the dialogue journals I had used with my pupils in which I was also able to raise and discuss some issues related to my research. I did not use these dialogue journals as formal sources of data as I had stressed their confidentiality and pupils wanted to keep them.
- I had a good understanding of some of the systemic constraints on teachers through experiencing them myself, and by collecting official documents such as syllabuses, examination papers, departmental guidelines, and daily work schedules;
- I had experienced the system in the school, such as the half-hour periods, testing and examination procedures, homework expectations, and all the aspects of the day-to-day routine of that particular school community.
- I had developed a good rapport with a number of teachers and felt that my presence was accepted in the school.

Despite these gains there was, I felt, a great deal more that needed to be done if I was to develop the 'thick' understanding that was appropriate to my research topic. Furthermore, a number of other factors, together with the problems mentioned above, brought about an adjustment of research questions and methodology. On the one hand, I sought a core method of data collection that would not be so subject to the disruptions which had become almost endemic in the schooling system at the time. On the other, issues that arose from my evaluation of 1993 pointed to the necessity of adding to my research questions, and this would bring about changes in data collection methods. The theoretical framework of genre analysts such as Martin (1989), Cope and Kalantzis (1993a,b) and Luke (1994), guided my research process and the development of research questions. As a result my initial research questions were:

- What genres are pupils exposed to in their high school career and what teaching processes are employed to help them gain control of these genres?
- How much writing are pupils expected to do in the high school and what is the nature of the writing that they do?

- What criteria are used in the assessment of writing and what messages does this send to the pupils about the nature and process of writing?
- How do teachers respond to pupils' writing and what messages does this send to the pupils about writing?
- What are teachers' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, writing and where do these come from?

I expected that I would be able to collect data relevant to these questions by working with and observing the standard nine classes that I taught, interviewing and observing teachers, analysing students' texts, unpacking what 'messages' official documents such as syllabuses and teacher guides sent to teachers about writing, and through informal conversations and observations. In the process of the research, adjustments to both research questions and to methods of data collection became necessary. For example, I found that pupils did not see essay writing as important even though a high proportion of marks were allocated to the essay paper in the matriculation examination. At the same time a great deal of importance was attached to the matriculation examination by both teachers and pupils. These considerations lead to an extension of the original questions to include the following central question:

- What are pupils' attitudes to writing and what factors give rise to these attitudes?
Related to this question was a secondary question:
- What 'messages' does the matriculation examination send to both pupils and teachers about writing in terms of what genres, assessment criteria, and writing processes are important?

These questions, combined with the problems experienced, gave rise to different methods of data collection. In order to answer the first of the added questions, and to find a less disruptable method of data collection, I decided to collect literate life histories of pupils as the central core of my data. This would enable me to capture their perceptions of writing and the factors which had shaped their knowledge of, and attitudes toward, writing (see next section). For the second of the added questions (as well as the first), I decided to mark matriculation papers for two years to gain firsthand experience of the whole process of assessing these essays and an understanding

of what messages it sent to teachers and pupils about writing. I collected information on the criteria that were used for assessing essays; the types of topics set and what topics were chosen by the students; how students approached different essay topics; and what this revealed about their perceptions of the tasks. I was also able, on an informal basis, to talk to a wide range of teachers about their teaching experience and about their perceptions of the teaching and learning of writing. The other decision I took was to focus the research on the teaching of writing in the school domain and not explore the interface between school and community literacy practices. While this is obviously an important area of investigation it is too broad to incorporate successfully into this research process.

3.3 Literate Life Histories as an Ethnographic Research Tool

Goodson and Walker (1988) maintain that literate life histories (LLHs) are a powerful means of enabling researchers to fulfil a basic aim of ethnographic research, namely the incorporation of the subjects' perspectives in the language they use to articulate them. Earlier in this chapter discussion on the principles of ethnographic research centred on the emic-etic principle of analysis, etic analysis referring to analysis in the language of the social sciences and emic analysis to the perspectives and interpretations of the participants being incorporated '...in the descriptive language they themselves use' (Watson-Gegeo 1988: 580). LLHs are particularly suited to fulfil the need of separating the voice of the researcher from that of the researched.

Campbell (1988) commented on the need to set up a two-way mirror between the observer and the observed. This enables a double focus that provides 'insight into the subject from the subjects' own perspective' (63) which then can be analyzed by the observer. Goodson and Walker (ibid) also focused on this issue and used insights from the work of Richard Brown (1967). He categorizes ethnographic research into two dimensions. The one dimension is the 'level of authority' that the author assumes towards the subjects. In other words to what extent does the author control the subjects' reported speech in contrast to letting the subjects 'speak for themselves'. The second dimension refers to the clarity of the boundaries between the words and meanings of the author and those of the subject (Goodson and Walker 1988:117). This is illustrated in the following figure:

Brown's categorization claims that life histories tend to reflect more accurately the perspectives and interpretations of the subjects' lives than descriptive ethnography, which he feels can be dominated by the concerns of the authors. Furthermore LLHs should enable a clearer boundary to be maintained between the interpretations of the researcher and those of the researched.

Another aspect of ethnographic research that LLHs promote is the insight they provide into the background that has created the 'here-and-now' of the subjects in relation to their particular context. Campbell quotes Shutz (1982) as saying that at any given moment in life an individual brings to a situation 'the sedimentation of all his (sic) previous experience' (p.xxvii). This is particularly relevant to my research because life histories of pupils' writing experiences could bring to the surface the 'sediment' that has shaped their present attitudes, knowledge and competencies. Both Evans (1993) and Cleary (1991) provide support for these conclusions. Cleary used LLHs in a research project wherein she interviewed 40 eleventh grade American students with a wide range of abilities and of diverse religious, gender, ethnic and social class backgrounds. Her aim via this process was to access the meanings students made of their experience with writing, and to link this with their attitudes towards it and the way they approach it (10). Evans' aim in collecting subjects' LLHs was that insights into their previous literate history would enable him to better understand how they saw the reading and writing activities they were being asked to perform:

I believe that by listening to these histories...we will be better able to map their understanding of reading and writing as they develop...we can also then begin to identify how the contexts for their reading and writing and the different participant structures within which they read and write...influence those understandings. (1993: 318)

LLHs also have the potential to provide some insight into the literate practices of the community. This is important for two reasons. Firstly, it is important to understand how community practices have shaped pupils' attitudes and perceptions of writing and its place in their lives. Secondly, the interface between community practices and school practices is an important area to explore because the extent to which they match or mismatch has an important impact on students' literate development. It is an important element in the 'participant structures' (ibid) within which the pupils I study read and write, and would thus provide some insight into how this might influence their understandings.

A further advantage that LLHs offer ethnographic research is a possible solution to the tension between what Dollard (1949 quoted in Goodson and Walker) sees as 'the weight of collective tradition and expectation [on the one hand] and the individual's unique history and capacity for interpretations and action' [on the other] (Goodson and Walker 1988: 116). Dollard warns that:

...as soon as we take the post of observer on the cultural level the individual is lost in the crowd and our concepts never lead back to him (sic). After we have 'gone cultural' we experience the person as a fragment of a (derived) culture pattern, as a marionette dancing on the strings of (reified) culture forms. (ibid: 115)

This warns ethnographers against the dangers of simplistically seeing their subjects as objective products of an overarching 'culture'. An example, related to my research, would be the danger of too easily attributing pupils' writing development and attitudes to the ills of the apartheid education system or to a simplistic notion of oral culture. LLHs offer the potential, through the foregrounding of the subject's voice, to uncover 'the individual's unique history and capacity for interpretations and action' (Ibid: 116) in a particular context. The potential of LLHs to keep in view the situation as interpreted by others as well as the subject could also 'let us see clearly the pressures of the formal situation' (Ibid: 116). In my research it is important to be able to understand how the formal situation, especially that of the schooling system, shapes both teachers'

and pupils' perceptions of the learning and teaching of writing.

The focus of this discussion on LLHs has been on the opportunities offered by their use, but it is important to look both at some of the problems inherent in their use, and at the issues involved in using interviews as means of data collection. David Thomas (1995), writing about the use of teacher narratives in research, pointed to three problem areas relevant to my research situation, namely, 'intrusion and collaboration', 'analysis and interpretation', and 'what counts as knowledge?' (19). The first issue, 'intrusion and collaboration', centres around the relationship between researcher and subject. Thomas states that the discourse conventions of biographic research imply a relationship of intimacy and trust, a basic requisite of ethnographic research, yet the requirement to make data and conclusions public violates those conventions. Furthermore, there is the problem of the power differential between researcher and researched and the researcher-interpreter's desire 'to see and indeed impose, patterns, images and meaning on to the narratives' (ibid: 17). These two issues point to the necessity of firstly negotiating and establishing from the outset a clear and agreed understanding of the nature of the research and its aims, and of the relationship between researcher and subject, and secondly, of ensuring a clear separation between the voices of the researcher and the subject. This second point has already been discussed as an advantage of LLHs and Thomas emphasises the importance of maintaining this distinction. On the first issue, my own perception was that there was little uncertainty in the relationship between me as the researcher and the pupils, although there were other problems that emanated from the power/status differential which will be discussed later. However, the relationship between me and the teachers was not as clear cut, as I had cultivated a relationship of colleague in the classroom which was at odds with my role as researcher/interpreter in the school context.

In the second problem area, 'analysis and interpretation', Thomas identifies two key issues. The first is how the researcher interprets 'memories shaped by experiences which themselves are products of particular social and historical circumstances' (ibid: 18). In my research, the problem was how to interpret pupil and teacher memories shaped in large part by their experience of apartheid social, political, and educational history. The location of their community, their socio-economic status, and the provision and circumstances of their education have been determined by apartheid policies. How does one unravel this from other factors that might have impacted on

pupils' literate development? The second issue concerns how one accounts for the interpreter's own biography in the process of interpretation: 'If there are no innocent texts then there are no privileged interpretations' (ibid: 18). The researcher's task is to lead the reader through, and interpret, the subjects' life histories. In the light of the issues mentioned above it is imperative to make explicit the theoretical standpoint the researcher is coming from, as well as keeping the voices of the interpreter and subject separate.

Lastly Thomas raises the issue of what counts as knowledge in life histories of this nature? There are problems of unreliable memories and unverifiable facts. This problem points to the necessity of triangulation: bringing to bear data from different sources, collected by different methods so that a holistic, 'thick' description around the research area is built. This enables researchers to find a means of representing and responding to subjects' texts and interpretations in such a way as to create perceptions of reliable and grounded interpretation. For example, in my research the literate life histories of pupils have been triangulated with data collected from a number of different sources. These include amongst others:

- participating in the marking of matric English essay examinations in order to understand what 'messages' these examinations sent to teachers and pupils about criteria for effective writing and what genres were favoured in the examination;
- conducting interviews with teachers to gain an understanding of their literate development, teacher training, and perceptions about writing and teaching writing in the school context;
- collecting official documents such as syllabus guides, examinations, and teachers' daily work schedules in order to understand the systemic constraints on teachers and what these documents say to teachers about their tasks;
- and analysing students' writing to understand how they approached their writing tasks and what this indicated about their control of different genres.

3.3.1 Interviewing and Literate Life Histories

Much of the data for the LLHs was collected by means of interviews and this method of collecting

ethnographic information on writing requires some discussion. Thomas raises the question about the merits of written narratives as opposed to oral accounts (i.e. interviews) arguing that oral accounts 'leave less room for second thoughts, authorial judgements and amendments' (24) and that this made them more *authentic accounts*. On reflection, this seems a dubious claim. Barton and Pradmore (1993) in a study in Lancaster, England, on the role of literacy in people's everyday lives, describe a process of initial interviews and follow up interviews. They found that subjects had time to reflect on the issues raised in the initial interview and would arrive with further information. This process mirrors that of writing, with time to reflect and make amendments and additions, and should not invalidate the data. I have included some data from written literate life histories that I collected from teachers studying in postgraduate courses that I have been involved in. While these teachers were not from the school in the study they were working in school contexts similar to it. Thomas's comments seem to ignore some of the problems of interviews such as: differential power/status relations; respondents' understanding of both the interview process and the topic of the interview; and respondents attempting to give the answers that they perceive the interviewer wants to hear. These could have a far more powerful monitoring effect on responses than the process of writing. Indeed, an argument can be made that writing could be a less threatening process for the subjects without the physical presence of the interviewer to 'shape' responses.

Smagorinsky (1994) argues that it is not the research method per se that accounts for the quality of an investigation. He argues that the choice of methods should be determined by the nature of the issue being investigated. In any form of research, qualitative or quantitative, 'the methodology shapes the data, and the researcher's hypotheses and theoretical framework affect the interpretation of the results' (xvii). Chin (1994) takes up this issue when she investigates interviewing as a qualitative method in writing research. She challenges the assumption that researchers can improve the reliability of interview data and that they can ascertain the true beliefs of respondents if standard scientific methods are used (248). She takes the social constructionist view that interviews are discursive practices subject to similar rules of social interaction to those of other discourse activities. She defines an interview as a planned and purposeful process in which there is an agreement between researcher and subject to talk about certain issues.

Interviews are a specific type of interaction between participants governed by an implicit set of rules. These rules establish, to some extent, the purposes of the interview, the kinds of activities that can take place, the various roles, the actions assigned to each participant's role, and the structure of the interaction. (253)

As a 'meaning-constructive' (252) activity it cannot be assumed that participants share the same understandings of what it means to be in an interview; what the topic is about; or what their roles in the interview should be. Consequently, the responses given in an interview, and their interpretation, cannot be seen as unproblematic. The significance of subjects' statements will be largely determined by the theoretical framework that the researcher brings to them.

Chin offers useful guidelines about how one should report on the research process in order to give a full account of the findings. She argues for a comprehensive report of all aspects of the interview process. This would include the following:

- the type of interviewing technique used: open-ended, discourse-based, or text-based;
- the way the interview was conducted: the procedure needs to be reported in detail as well as the questions asked;
- details such as how many interviews were conducted, with whom, how often, and in what contexts;
- details about the questions asked in the interview such as interview schedules or transcripts;
- and details about the conditions under which the interviews took place such as the setting, who was present, what was done during the interview, and how responses were recorded

3.4 The Process of Interviewing

Before discussing my interview processes, it is important to give some background to the overall context in which they took place. I started interviewing teachers towards the end of 1993 when I did two pilot interviews. I then interviewed both staff and students in 1994, 1995 and 1996. In 1996 I did not work directly in the school but I was involved in the Language in Learning and Teaching Project attached to our department which was involved in school based work with teachers. I was thus able to keep regular contact with the school in this capacity. By 1994 I felt

comfortable working in the school environment but more importantly, I felt that teachers and students felt reasonably comfortable working with me and trusted me. During my teaching time I had ready access to students for observation and discussion on a daily basis. I also had access to teachers in the normal processes of the working day, the only difference being that I was not there all day. However, I felt that I was recognizably a colleague dealing with the same issues, and involved in the same processes such as teaching, setting and marking examinations and tests, recording marks and so on. After the hesitations of 1993 mentioned above (see pages 78-82), I now found that staff and students were happy to have me in their classrooms observing them, discussing issues with them, and collecting samples of their work. In this context it was not difficult for me to gain access to participants for interviews even in 1996 and subsequently when I was not working directly in the school.

For my basic LLH research I approached six standard nine students from my 1994 class individually and asked them if they were prepared to be interviewed. I explained what I was interested in - basically the history of their schooling and their reading and writing experiences. I stressed that it was entirely voluntary and that I would understand if they refused. Four expressed real interest. The other two agreed in a non-committal way and it was hard to gauge whether this was shyness or whether they felt constrained to 'volunteer' because I was their teacher. I chose those that I thought from their class behaviour would not be too intimidated by the notion of an interview. I also chose them according to my perception of their writing and language ability as demonstrated in my English class. I chose two I perceived as the most competent, two in the middle range and two of the weaker students. I wanted, amongst other things, to see whether there was any relation between their abilities in, and attitudes towards, writing and their LLHs.

My own, and the students', time and travel constraints meant that the only place I could interview them was in the school premises during the school day. I interviewed them during the lunch break in an office in the administration block which had a desk and a number of chairs. The situation was not ideal for a number of reasons. Firstly, there was some noise outside the office although not overly intrusive. An office in the administration block might have had negative connotations for the students which, together with the whole process of interviewing, could have been

associated with something punitive, for example, 'going to see the principal'. Students could also have seen this as some sort of test in which they ought to have the right answers. My age and status, both as a teacher and an English mother-tongue speaker, tended to make these interviews more formal than those with permanent staff members, where status and language ability differences were not as marked. Thus there were a number of inhibiting factors which might have affected the responses of the students in various ways. An important factor was that of language. The first two interviews I conducted with the stronger students and I did not use an interpreter. My feeling was that this did not interfere with the process. However, when I did provide an interpreter for the other four students, they used him frequently for clarification of my questions and responses and for straight translation of what they had said. This made me feel that the other students might have used the interpreter if he had been available. The presence of the interpreter could either be an inhibiting or facilitating factor. The interpreter was a young teacher who was doing a postgraduate BEd in our department in second language teaching and learning. I chose him because I knew that he had an easy and non-threatening manner with pupils and, although the pupils did not know him, they did not seem to hesitate to use him. Thus I felt that his presence was not a strong inhibiting factor.

In order to overcome some of these inhibiting factors I negotiated with the students that I would supply their lunch which they could 'order'. This allowed for a relaxed beginning to the interview as the lunch was opened and commented on. We were thus able to begin with informal conversation and some time for eating before the formal part of the interview started. I also asked them to choose a name they would like to be called by for the interview, as I was not going to use their real names in the research. In this way I was able to reassure them of the confidentiality of the process in a way that was relaxing and sometimes amusing. I once again explained the purpose of the interview stressing that they had knowledge I needed and that they were doing me a favour by giving me information about which I was ignorant.

My questions were based on those used by Cleary (1991) in the research project I have already mentioned (see page 91). I adapted them for the particular context in which I was working (Appendix 2). These questions were guidelines as many questions evolved out of the interaction and I tried to be as flexible as possible to allow each interview to unfold in its own way. The

questions tended to take students through a chronology of their literate development, but often questions and discussion would go back to events and issues covered earlier in the interview. For the recording of their responses I used a tape recorder. I negotiated this with them when I first approached them and repeated the request again at the beginning of the interview. I stressed the confidentiality of the process and that their names, and the names of the school and community, would not appear in my thesis. The interviews lasted for about forty minutes and I did follow up interviews with one of the students whom I felt was the most at ease in the interview situation in order to probe more deeply on issues that had surfaced in the first round of interviews. After that first repeat interview I felt that little that was new emerged, and decided not to pursue that process as I felt I had enough data from other interviews and sources.

As far as staff were concerned the main difficulty was scheduling time with them given the constraints on their time at school and the constraints imposed by my university responsibilities. For these reasons I interviewed one in my office and two at home. The interview focussed on the teacher's background and literate life history looking particularly at teacher training and the way they saw the teaching and learning of writing in the school. I investigated their perceptions of students' attitudes to writing as well as their understanding of students' general background and community experience. I also sought their perceptions of the problems and possibilities of the situation they and the students were working in. In doing so I was picking up on issues highlighted by the LLHs I had done with the students in relation to their experiences of writing, feedback practices, use of textbooks and general classroom procedures they had mentioned. I made the interviews as informal and open-ended as possible. I had a list of central and follow-up questions that tended initially to follow the chronological order of the teacher's life history. The interviews ended up with discussion around their perceptions of the possibilities and constraints of teaching in the school, and their responses to issues about teaching writing that had emerged from the learners' LLHs and my observations. I had to be flexible to allow questions and issues to arise from the interviews themselves.

In setting up interviews with staff members, I approached those teachers that I had got to know well and who, in informal conversations, had expressed interest in the issues I was researching. I then approached them formally and requested an opportunity to interview them. At this juncture

I took on the role of researcher and was no longer just a colleague. However, I felt that my long period of work in the school paid dividends as I felt that I was trusted by the teachers. I stressed that they were under no obligation to comply with my request and assured them of confidentiality. I stressed that my purpose with the interviews was to learn about and understand the context in which they were working rather than to judge it - that I was seeking understandings and explanations from insiders rather than acting as a critic. As far as recording responses was concerned I asked them for permission to use a tape recorder and offered to show them my transcripts and my interpretation of it. All expressed interest in reading my thesis but were not concerned with checking my transcripts and interpretations beforehand.

The interview that took place in my office was with a Science teacher who had taken study leave to study on our campus. He studied two of the courses offered by our department: Learning, Language and Logic, a one year course aimed at developing ESL students' academic literacy and communicative competence; and Applied Language Studies, a general Applied Linguistics course in which he majored. He lived in the community, had done all his schooling there, and had taught in the school since 1984. I had got to know him well both as a teaching colleague and as a student. This long association allowed the interview to be informal, a focussed conversation on the issues surrounding the teaching of writing in the school in question. We sat facing each other with the tape recorder on a table next to us. The fact that the interview took place in my office and that, as his lecturer, I was a 'gatekeeper' as far as his academic progress was concerned, could have been inhibiting factors. However, I feel our long association and his success as a student mitigated strongly against these potentially face-threatening aspects of the interview. A second interview was with an old friend of mine with whom I had worked in NEUSA and in the NECC in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He had been the senior History teacher until the end of 1995 when he took up a post at our university. This interview took place in my home and, as friends and equals, we were able to create an informal and facilitative interview context. The third interview also took place at my house. He had been the senior English teacher at the school but had left the school in 1996 to work in the business world. While I did not share as close a personal relationship with him as with the previous respondent, we had a good relationship, and the interview went smoothly as a result.

The fact that both the senior History and English teachers were out of the school and the education system probably facilitated a freer exchange of information. They would not feel that anything they said would have any implications for their careers. This raises the question of the subjects' view of the interviewing process and whether the context in which they were working would have any bearing on this view. In the 1970s and 1980s the education authorities of the DET kept strict control over what happened in schools and especially what research was done. This seemed to have dissipated by the time I started in the school because the principal merely consulted the PTA of the school about my presence there and not the education authorities. However, it was important to ensure that the teachers did not perceive the interviews as judgmental. I stressed the confidentiality of the interview ensuring them that their names would not be used, that neither the name of the community nor the school would be used. I stressed their role as informants for me as I lacked their knowledge and experience of the context in which we were working. I also pointed out that I needed their explanations for some of the observations I had made. I tried as far as possible to put them in the role of expert commentators on the school and community context.

During the interviews of both teachers and students I refrained from taking notes because I was worried that participants would perceive this as some kind of commentary on their answers, and that this would become an inhibiting factor. All in all I tried to make the interviews as close as possible to informal conversations. However, it is impossible to escape the fact that an interview is taking place and it is fruitless to attempt to pretend otherwise.

I also had a group discussion/interview with two teachers whom I invited to my house for supper. The dynamics of interview situations change considerably whenever more than one person is being interviewed, or when more than one is doing the interviewing. Chin (1994; 258-264) succinctly identifies these differences. Group interviews are more likely to result in a joint construction or interpretation of issues, with participants 'building answers' as they go along. This allows for a number of perspectives to be brought to bear on the situation and could result in participants thinking more deeply and reflectively about the issues being discussed. The other advantage is that an open discussion might 'validate' perspectives that some participants might not have felt free to express in other contexts. The obvious dangers are that some participants' perspectives are lost in the process as 'consensus' is striven for. Also dominance of one

perspective might mean that opposing views are not brought forward. A problem for ESL speakers in my context is that language problems might inhibit responses so that the first opinion expressed could be the one accepted in order to escape the potentially face-threatening burden of further interaction. I did not formally record this interview as I had set it up as a social occasion and an opportunity to discuss issues relating to the school. Nevertheless, I was able to raise similar issues to those that I had raised in the more formal interviews and to debate responses to them. As such it provided useful insights.

3.5 Other Data Gathering Processes

Most of the other data gathering methods have already been mentioned in the description of the history and evolution of the data gathering process. Suffice here to summarise them and the rationale for their use:

- For two years, 1993 and 1994, I marked the matriculation English second language essay paper. This was because I experienced a surprising lack of interest in essay writing amongst the pupils I taught, given the importance of the essay in the overall mark allocation of the examination. Pupils seemed more interested in decontextualised grammar exercises. I felt that part of the explanation for these attitudes might lie in the way in which the matriculation examination was set and the criteria for evaluation that were employed. Given the potential filter down effect that public exit examinations might have on teachers' and pupils' perceptions of what was valued, it would be important to gain an understanding of what messages the matriculation examination sent to teachers and pupils about writing.
- I observed teaching in the classroom across a range of subjects to see what range of writing tasks pupils were required to do and how these were taught and assessed. I wanted to see how this related to what had emerged from learners' LLHs. I also followed a class around from lesson to lesson for a number of days to get firsthand experience of their day-to-day experience of writing.
- I collected their exercise books across different subjects to see how much extended writing learners were required to do and how teachers responded to their writing.

- I also examined official documents such as syllabuses, teacher guides and schedules, and examinations across different subjects. I felt these documents would provide important insights into how teachers perceived the teaching of writing. They would reveal information which would have a bearing on teachers' workloads, their attitudes towards writing and its place in the curriculum, and how they taught and assessed writing.
- I analysed pupils' writing to see what they revealed about their understandings of the structural and linguistic conventions of different genres.

To conclude, this chapter has described the basic principles underlying ethnographic research methods and their applicability to this investigation. In the course of describing the history and development of the research process, the use of literate life histories as a tool for ethnographic research was established, and the rationale for their employment in the context of the research explained. The need for triangulation of data by employing different methods and sources from data collection was also explored and the different ways in which this was accomplished was described. This picture describes an attempt to fulfil a number of aims of ethnographic research such as:

- to study people's behaviour in the ongoing settings in which it occurs and to provide a *cultural interpretation* of their behaviour from their words and actions, 'a descriptive and interpretive-explanatory account' (Watson-Gegeo 1988: 577);
- to capture the 'local meanings' (Erickson 1986: 121-122) that events have for the participants;
- and to bring to the surface the 'sediment' that shapes their attitudes, perceptions and knowledge.

By doing so the research process hopes to provide insight into the literacy experiences of learners in one school context and how these are shaped by a variety of factors, such as: the training and attitudes of teachers; the constraints imposed by syllabuses and examinations; and many others. In essence, the research process is an attempt to describe and analyse the teaching of writing in the school in relation to the whole system of which it is a part.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS:

‘VOICES IN THE DARK’ - LEARNERS’ LITERATE HISTORIES IN SCHOOL

This chapter analyses the data collected by the various means described in chapter 3 and it is analysed in terms of the criteria established in chapter 2. The central core of my data comes from literate life histories (LLHs) collected from six grade 11 students, and this data is triangulated with data collected from:

- interviews with teachers detailing their LLHs and their responses to some of the issues raised by the learners’ LLHs;
- participant observation as an examiner in the English Second Language National Senior Certificate matriculation examinations;
- observation of classroom teaching and activities;
- my own observations as a teacher of standard nine English classes over two and a half years;
- data from more informal sources such as conversations and observations;
- investigation of official documents which impact on the teaching of writing in the school system;
- and analysis of students’ writing.

This data is analysed in relation to what kinds and levels of literate competencies the teaching of writing distributes to the learners in the particular school studied. Thus the data will be analysed in terms of:

- what genres students experience in their schooling;
- how those genres are taught and assessed;
- how these experiences of writing shape learners’ skills, attitudes to, and perceptions of writing and of themselves as writers;
- what the reasons are for the ways in which writing is taught and assessed;
- and what the outcomes are for the learners in relation to access to different levels and

kinds of literacy.

The LLHs and interviews with teachers mention fictional names allocated to each individual. Excerpts from their interviews are included in the appendices, together with background information on each of them. As each respondent is introduced the appropriate appendix number is indicated.

The community and school in which the study took place have already been described in chapter 3. It will be sufficient to provide a brief summary of the school at this juncture to remind the reader of central features of the school and its operation. While the school is relatively well provided for in terms of buildings, desks, a science laboratory, a domestic science room, and some computers, it still suffers from many of the problems of black schools in South Africa. The community surrounding it is poor, there is high unemployment, poor and overcrowded housing and a high crime rate. This impacts on the school in a number of ways. School property has often been vandalised or stolen, which has resulted in the erection of high security fencing around the school. Pupils often do not have a place to do homework at home and homes are often used to run businesses involving the pupils' time. The high unemployment is a demotivating factor, with few graduates from the school being able to find jobs, and this in turn contributes to pupils' involvement in crime. The relationship between school and community is problematic, with the different constituents - teachers, parents and students - often at odds with each other over issues.

Within the school environment, a number of problems exist. Formal schooling often takes a long time to get underway at the beginning of the year. In 1993 and 1994 the full timetable took a month to be finalised and many classes spent hours doing no school work. Classroom teaching usually stopped at the end of October for examinations which effectively meant that learners in this school were receiving nearly two months less teaching time per year than their counterparts in more advantaged schools in the city. There is also a shortage of textbooks in many subjects which contributes to the maintenance of rote learning methods. All in all there is a general apathy about schoolwork and homework; there is a high drop out rate; absenteeism is high especially after the lunch break; and the matriculation pass rate is dismally low. This situation is not helped by large classes and the retrenchment and redeployment of teachers. It is against this backdrop

that the data gathered in the research needs to be understood.

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Learners' Literate Life Histories (LLHs)

What emerges from the LLHs of learners is analysed and triangulated with findings from other areas of the research process. For example, the assessment practices of teachers that emerge from the LLHs is linked to assessment practices and criteria used in matriculation examinations as a means of providing some explanation for teachers' practices. The criteria for effective writing programmes established in chapter 2, against which the data will be analysed, are summarised as follows:

- The development of a confidence-building and risk-taking environment where learners' confidence in the value and worth of their own 'voices' and experiences is encouraged.
- Conscious attention to strategies for effective writing and the development of an awareness of writing as a process of refinement.
- Explicit teaching of the relationship between the social purposes of texts and their conventional structural and linguistic realisations.
- Content which gives learners an experience of a wide range of genres.
- Assessment practices which are linguistically principled, criterion referenced and thereby diagnostic and formative as well as summative.
- A sequenced and explicit process of moving from the familiar, through the abstraction of the specialised knowledge of schooling, to reflective, critical practice.

An analysis of learners' experiences of writing in school in the light of these criteria indicate that they have encountered little that would be considered appropriate (Appendices 3-8). They have experienced very minimal writing and most of it has consisted of 'one-off' efforts with little or no comment on them. In other words the prevalent process was one where the teacher provided the topics, pupils wrote a single draft, and this was returned by teachers with minimal comment and a summative mark.

4.1.1 Quantity of Writing and Range of Genres Experienced

In both language classes (English and Zulu) and content subjects, Thulani (Appendix 3), Gladys (Appendix 4), Prof (Appendix 5), Romeo (Appendix 6), Roka (Appendix 7) and Kingsize (Appendix 7) all report similar experiences. In language classes Thulani states that he wrote 'business and informal and friendly letters' and compositions on 'birthday parties and trips'. He never experienced writing an argumentative essay and remembered writing an average of two compositions a year, one of them being in an examination: 'We write one composition and write one composition in the exams, two compositions'. Kingsize remembers writing one letter and one composition per year in English and the same for Zulu in the primary school. In standard six he wrote three different types of letters, namely the formal letter, the informal letter and the business letter. The amount of writing throughout his high school career averaged around two letters and an essay a year in both English and Zulu although he described the three compositions he did in standard eight as 'dialogues'. Gladys mentioned only 'reports on things they had read from books' and letters and had never written an argumentative (expository) essay. Prof's memories of writing experiences at high school consisted of two essays in Zulu in standard seven (grade nine) and one in English, and six or seven letters across both languages. In standard eight he recalled 'two compositions in Zulu and about three letters' and in English 'only one letter and two compositions'. He commented that in standard eight 'nothing was new ... basically we were forced to stay with the language we had to push the language'. This can be interpreted from my observations of other classes as a focus on grammar exercises and comprehension exercises. In standard nine Prof recalls writing two compositions, one essay and four letters across both English and Zulu and was never asked to write an argumentative essay although he recalls making notes for oral debates. Romeo's first experience of any extended writing in both English and Zulu was in standard four when he wrote about five letters in Zulu and 'two or three' in English. In standard five he remembers writing three telegrams, no letters because 'telegrams were new to us' and two compositions in both Zulu and English. In high school in standard six he encountered a business letter 'to order something' which was written in both Zulu and English. This was a feature of that year, what was written in Zulu was also written in English. He felt that he encountered an unusually heavy writing load in that year, 'write too many, too many', as he wrote four compositions in Zulu and four in English. The rest of his high school career consisted of two

letters and two compositions a year for both Zulu and English. Roka remembers about four writing activities a year in primary school where learners were given a topic and could choose between writing a letter, dialogue or composition around that topic. Roka's high school experience of extended writing was minimal. He remembers two or three compositions a year but some of these had been copied from boards; when questioned about what writing he had done himself, he said that he had only written one a year and another in the examinations. In his standard nine year he had only written one 'composition' which consisted of a letter written by the teacher on the board (I was present on this occasion), copied by the learners: 'she was just telling us, just showing us on the board, you also do the same and that's how we did it'. This he maintained was how he 'wrote' all his letters during his high school career.

The overwhelming impression from these respondents is that they wrote few essays and that these essays were predominantly recounts or descriptions. The topics that seemed prevalent were topics about journeys ('My Journey by Train/Bus'), accidents, important days in their lives, sports events, frightening or important experiences, and topics like 'My School', 'The School that I would Like', 'My First day at School' for descriptive essays. Kingsize recalls writing about 'myself, my dog and my school', and 'about what you want to be when you grow up'. One respondent remarked in conversation that he had written 'My Journey by Train' each year for three years. He added that as he had not ever been on a train he made a story up each year. When I have mentioned this in workshops that I have conducted with teachers and adult educators, they indicate that that particular topic is formulaically set on a regular basis across the school system. There is no evidence of any of these pupils being asked to write an argument. Prof and Romeo have experienced oral class debates but they were never required to present these arguments in written form. Romeo recalls a debate against another school where only a small group of five were involved in preparing the debate. In relation to issues of access to wide communicative power through control over a variety of genres, it seems that these learners have been provided with access to an extremely narrow range of genres. This will impact negatively on their opportunities to participate in society. The complete absence of any writing of argument, for example, would make success in tertiary institutions very problematic. Furthermore, these students are not being provided with the scaffolded experience to move from everyday spoken language and be apprenticed into the abstraction of specialised knowledge (Macken-Horarik

1996).

These conclusions are reinforced when one examines their experiences of writing in content subjects. Most of their writing seems to consist of copying notes from the board. This was corroborated by my own informal observations around the school and when I followed a class from lesson to lesson over a week. Thulani speaks of his writing over a school day as consisting largely of copying notes from the board, ‘...in History we are taught then given the skeleton notes of the chapter and then the teacher asks us to make our own notes most of the time. I do notes in History, Biology and Geography’. In standard six, seven and eight they did not write any essays in history: ‘we were just answering short questions’. In standard nine they were confronted with an essay topic but ‘we were not informed about how we must put our ideas, we just put it on all scattered all of it not in a paragraph form...our writing was like the notes from the board’. Gladys reported that she had not written any compositions in Geography or History. Prof also reported extensive copying from the board in Physics, Biology and Geography. He explains this as result of a shortage of textbooks in the classroom and also in terms of a dependence on the teacher. For example, the Geography teacher used to do her own notes and photocopy them for learners. Prof stated that she did the notes because ‘they propose how can the student do their own notes, but the problem is you see the students were complaining they can’t do that ... it’s too hard, some of us were saying yes we can do the notes, some of us can say no we can’t, so the majority say we can’t so we end of saying okay the teachers have to do the notes’. In Geography learners were not required to write an essay, ‘we just go straight to the points the main points we have to do’. This was confirmed in observations of other classrooms where in the Biology class, for example, students walked into the classroom and immediately copied notes which filled the blackboard across the width of the classroom. In the last fifteen minutes of the session the teacher explained the notes. Both Romeo and Kingsize confirm this observation. Kingsize described the experience as follows:

Hey, in Biology as you saw, we would have to write notes, then the next day the teacher would explain the notes to us. We had to write an assignment - maybe we would have to write about, explain this, in so many words. Or maybe we would just describe - the parasite life cycle, you see. Then we would have to write it like that.

He used Biology as an example of the type of writing he experienced in other subjects - copying notes from the board and using those to reproduce short answer 'assignments'. Gladys describes her experience of History as, 'I copy from the board and I, I read the questions, from that notes'.

Thulani's explanation for this seems to be centred around his sense of students' grammatical inadequacies which he feels make textbooks incomprehensible: 'we must know how to place the words that we might help the ideas, the meaning'. He also feels the teachers know what is important for examinations and tests:

The book sometimes mentioned the things that are not very much important. The teacher will give the notes because he know what the test needs. He will just give the important things.

He is aware that this has serious effects on pupils' confidence and their ability to write:

That's why you may find that if you talk with the students he will take time to understand what is being said because most of the time he is not talking he is first given the work, given the work. When you done the work, given the mark, finish.

All the respondents describe their writing experience in other subjects as confined to writing short answers to questions set by the teacher. Roka describes writing in science as 'describe experiment, analyse its use' and in biology examination tasks as 'she will give us a diagram of a male reproductive cell then we will label it and we will ask questions...'. When asked about his writing experiences in other subjects Romeo used the example of Biology: 'There was nothing, nothing. You only write notes and the teacher will explain to us, then he will give us some classwork we must do this, do that, we must answer these questions'. The same sort of process applied in Prof's experience of geography. Martin (1993a) and Macken-Horarik (1996) both emphasise the need for factual writing to be explicitly taught from the early stages of schooling. Martin questions the practice in Australian schools of ten years of narrative/expressive writing followed by a sudden and unsupported demand to write argument, literary criticism and other forms of more advanced factual writing. He argued that this favoured middle class learners: those whose patterns of

interaction and access to reading enabled them to gain control over these genres without explicit help. For learners from ESL and marginalised communities this sort of learning experience would be inadequate and would result in unequal access to tertiary education and employment opportunities. Thulani describes a similar sort of experience with the writing of History essays:

During standard eight and seven we didn't write essays, we were just answering those short questions ... [in standard nine] while we were given the topic [of a history essay] we were not informed about how we must put our ideas, we just put it on all scattered, all of it not in a paragraph form ... we had no idea what strategies we must use. Our writing was like the notes from the board. We done it and when she marked it she didn't complain that we used the wrong tactic to write the essay.

The sort of teaching practices described by the pupils above indicates that they are not being systematically inducted into 'dealing with texts which construct and disseminate knowledge' nor with the way in which 'knowledge is built up and modelled through the language of the written style'. Martin (1993b) would argue that science learners would 'need an understanding of the structure of genres and the grammar of technicality' (202). Without this they are unable to produce writing that would be 'respected' by gatekeepers of the discipline.

4.1.2 Textbooks and Literate Development

Interviews with teachers (Appendices 9-11) on this issue revealed a number of reasons for the practice of reproducing textbooks in note form on the blackboard. First and foremost there was a shortage of textbooks (in the biology class mentioned earlier there were three textbooks available in a class of thirty). Secondly, many of the textbooks are inappropriate and inaccessible for ESL learners, and a History teacher felt that by writing his own notes on the board he was 'translating' the text books and making them comprehensible to his learners. Dumisa, a science teacher (Appendix 10), stated that 'you find yourself forced to do that because on their own students cannot handle those textbooks, language inside there becomes a problem'. Another very interesting explanation was provided by a Geography teacher, who stated that this practice of copying was a teacher strategy to deal with the heavy demands of the syllabus. Principals and the inspectorate tended to demand written evidence that work was covered. The most expedient way

to accomplish this, given work conditions, was to get children to copy from the board and thus provide the necessary evidence that the syllabus was ‘covered’. The teacher in question called this ‘the-crunch- and-carry-on-method’ descriptive of the treadmill process of completing the syllabus. It also indicated an awareness that though the work had been covered, not much would have been comprehended. Bongani (Appendix 9) had another view of the relationship between the textbook situation and notes on the blackboard. He stated that there was no shortage of textbooks at the school, it was just that the pupils lost them because they never felt the necessity to bring them to school. He stated that when pupils come to school they only carry ‘exercise books, no textbooks. Because the kids know you go to biology, you write notes, you go to geography, you write notes’. According to him the books are lost early in the year ‘because they do not have to carry them to class’.

These comments by teachers have interesting parallels in the research done under the auspices of the Presidents Education Initiative (PEI). Launched in 1996, the research component of the PEI commissioned 35 research studies in the following areas:

- establishing best practices in the teaching of mathematics, science, or English with particular reference to Curriculum 2000.
- identifying difficulties in the teaching of large classes, multigrade classes or multilingual classes and investigating ways of overcoming these.
- investigating the availability and use of learning materials.

(Diphofa, Vinjevold and Taylor 1999: 6)

The PEI research found that very few teachers are using textbooks in any systematic way even when they are available. Teachers cited many of the reasons for this situation mentioned by the teachers in this study, namely, that students are unable to read them, and that they are out-of-date and inappropriate. On the other hand, the PEI research suggests that many teachers avoid using textbooks because of their own poor content knowledge and reading skills. An added factor that comes from this research is that systemic pressures, in the form of syllabus demands, the bureaucracy of accountability, and overcrowded classrooms, push teachers towards strategies such as blackboard notes to provide written evidence of work covered. Whatever the combination of

reasons for the situation described in the PEI research and this study, the fact that learners leave their textbooks at home because they are never required to use them at school indicates the extent to which learners are deprived of literacy skills.

Genre analysts would argue that textbooks should serve as powerful models of discipline specific genres. They should provide the means for students to move from everyday experience to the domain of specialised knowledge (Macken-Horarik 1996). What the respondents have experienced does not provide them with this sort of experience nor does it enable them to work independently with textbooks. Furthermore, as Thulani stated, this classroom process promotes replication and rote learning without any reflective and developmental process involved in writing: 'when you done the work, given the mark, finish'. Various researchers in South African education have commented on the issue of textbooks and their impact on learning and teaching. Macdonald (1990a,b) commented on the effect of the sudden transition from mother-tongue instruction for the first four years of schooling (with English as a subject) to English as medium of instruction (MOI) in the fifth year. She calculated that on average in these circumstances, children could develop an English vocabulary of approximately 800 words. However, the children were faced with text books across all the different subjects which required a vocabulary of around 5000 words. They were thus faced with the onerous tasks of learning a deluge of new concepts in different disciplines and a new language at the same time. The learners did not have the language skills to process and internalise new concepts. Langham (1993) confirmed Macdonald's findings. He found the gap between the learners' language competence and the language levels demanded by the text books so vast that learners were unable to read the text books or manage the tasks and exercises. The textbooks did not take the learners' language levels into account nor their frames of reference. This meant that they did not provide appropriate mediating experiences which would have enabled learners to move from their own knowledge and experience into the new concepts that the textbooks were supposed to be developing.

In the face of these difficulties, Macdonald found that teachers resorted to methods that were ultimately detrimental to the conceptual development of the learners. Classroom interaction was dominated by teacher talk, chanted responses by the learners, rote learning and memorisation. Macdonald saw the situation as self-perpetuating. Teachers resorted to rote learning and drilling

because learners could not read and, because of this, learners did not learn to read effectively. The result was a crippling neglect of the basic skills on which the future academic progress of learners depends, namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Vinjevold (1999), summarising the PEI research into the provision and use of learning materials in South African schools, writes that teachers either do not use materials, such as textbooks, or use them in a haphazard way. The tasks ‘do not demand higher order skills and knowledge’ and ‘often do not engage learners in progressively more demanding activities aimed at developing reading, writing and numeracy skills’ (184). In particular, Macdonald found minimal time spent on reading and writing. The learners’ LLHs indicate that this is a practice which permeates the whole system. The prevalence of copying notes off blackboards, and the minimal writing and narrow range of genres that learners experience, confirm Macdonald’s findings. They indicate that the problems set in motion by the transition to English as MOI in year five without sufficient conceptual development in their mother tongue and sufficient English language development are ones that learners carry with them throughout their schooling. It also indicates that these problems impact on the methodologies teachers’ employ to respond to them.

The issue of the use of textbooks has important implications for the development of appropriate and empowering literate behaviours in learners. Vinjevold (1999: 166-168) reports on research in the Philippines and South Africa where students who used textbooks achieved more than learners who did not. The research in South Africa reported more individual and group work, and more involvement and motivation. Furthermore, the more the materials were used the greater the benefits. In contrast, the situation described by the learners in this research indicates the extent to which important learning experiences are being denied them. This will have a significantly detrimental effect on their ability to process and produce texts and consequently on their chances of success in their academic and working lives.

4.1.3 The Teaching of Writing

As far as the teaching of writing is concerned Thulani’s predominant memory was of the

‘teacher in class with a book of language we will get and exercise book on top of

the desk. We just read the comprehension. After that we just answer the question. We will not be given maybe anything, maybe like a composition to make us create things for ourselves. We usually depend on the books, depend on the teacher.'

He feels that they were 'not educated how to write a composition', 'We just copy the composition to see how composition appears. Afterwards we write the same composition in a test'. The overall impression from Thulani's LLH is that teaching consisted of vague general comments about the structure of an essay using an example from the board: 'They talked about [introductions] but they did not make sure that we understand how to use it. They just talked. If then the teacher's work is done. Okay finished'. As far as the teaching of paragraphs was concerned it seemed to consist of the teacher talking about an example on the board, 'the pupils just take the copied message then the teacher will explain each and every paragraph what it is about'. Prof also spoke of teachers writing something on the board, an example or 'some notes' and after explaining what is on the board, instructing the learners to do the same thing on their own. With letters 'you have to take this stuff that you have seen on the board and you have to copy that as it is on the board and you'll do your own letter'. With compositions, after discussion on the notes, the teachers say 'this is the notes and you have to copy these notes ... you have to know them and learn them and practise how to write a composition'. Gladys was taught that compositions should be in stages and that compositions must not be written like a letter, 'each composition should have a topic and what ideas you put across should be in line with the topic and then you write it sort of formally'. Kingsize recalls copying letters from the board in primary school and reproducing them in examinations or tests. In standard six, with the different types of letters, he was required to copy them from the board and then use those models to write homework assignments. He was also taught how to plan an essay in standard six but there is little evidence that that sort of teaching was consistent through his high school career. Romeo and Roka both received some tuition in planning an essay and building a coherent structure by modelling an essay on the board. Romeo describes the process:

... you write the introduction of the topic, you introduce your topic. And she will read to us the whole thing, the whole composition. Then she will tell us okay that you see this paragraph here on the introduction of this topic I am writing about, and the body, and the summary, now the conclusion of all you've said and done, and there was it.

While genre-based approaches favour modelling of texts they emphasise comparison across genres to bring home to learners how different communicative purposes are realised differently, each genre having its own distinctive beginning, middle and end. There is no evidence of this in the learners' experience. Given the narrow focus on narrative/expressive writing, these learners will only acquire a formulaic notion of 'introduction, body and conclusion' with no idea of how these might differ across genres nor of the functionality of that difference. For example, Romeo was told that 'you must write about 5 lines not about 10 to 15 lines, they said that is not a paragraph'. When asked why this was not considered a paragraph he answered, 'Because that is like if you are writing 15 lines that's a full page'.

The learners in this study are also not made aware of the link between context and language and thus between a genre and its linguistic realisations. My observations of classes and their exercise books revealed a preoccupation with decontextualised grammar exercises. There were no exercises that would encourage an awareness of language as a meaning-making resource as proposed by SFG linguists. When questioned, learners reported that most of the teaching time in the languages was taken up with teaching literature and grammar. Roka stated that teachers taught literature and 'how to write, and also read language. I think language is what we did the most'. It is interesting that when asked about what writing activities he experienced at school, Roka always mentioned grammar exercises first. In primary school, '... for instance a teacher will write a sentence on the board then he would say, okay, let's do a negative form of that sentence' and 'Also we did spelling, ya, abbreviations, also doing the opposites. We were given names and write the opposite of that'. In high school what he remembered about language work was changing sentences from direct to indirect speech and doing conjunctions. Prof, talking about his experience of writing in standard eight, saw it as the same as standard seven 'because nothing was new ... basically we were forced to stay with the language, we had to push the language'. In other subjects there is no evidence of any explicit teaching around the relationship between language and context to develop an understanding of the language for constructing reality in different subject areas. These learners experience language teaching for the sake of language teaching, and not as a meaning-making resource at text level, for specific purposes and audiences, and across all areas of the curriculum. In contrast, Macken-Horarik (1996: 273) quotes a teacher to illustrate her approach to the teaching of language in her science classes:

[I] explicitly model the language demands of the genre. I show them and tell them how to do it; step one, two, three, etcetera. I show the connectors, the processes. I am really down at language level. And then they have the means for dealing with language on their own. They can deconstruct texts even in exams. The language functions are there even in short-answer questions.

4.1.4 Assessment of Writing

The issue of language teaching is inextricably linked to assessment response strategies. It is through engagement with the process of drafting-feedback-redrafting that learners can be made explicitly aware of language/context relationships. Macken and Slade (1993) demonstrated how genre-based approaches enabled linguistically principled, criterion referenced assessment practices to be developed, that could be used by teachers to respond diagnostically and formatively to students' texts. The evidence from learners' LLHs indicates that they are not taught in a way that would develop the idea of writing as a process of refinement. There is evidence that learners experienced some modelling about basic essay structure (introduction, body and conclusion) but this was too generic to help them with anything beyond narrative writing. Beyond that learners experienced writing as a one-off process whereby the teacher determined the topic, a draft was submitted and then returned with a summative mark attached. What little comment there has been has focussed on surface errors such as spelling and narrow formulaic issues of addresses and spaces between paragraphs. When asked what comments teachers made on his written work, Prof mentions vague comments such as 'it just be perfect, or others say you didn't learn, or you didn't study your notes. Others say you've done a lot, it's quite right it's excellent ... English on there they just underline that and say that's not the right word'. The only rewriting he mentioned was corrections. Roka had similar experiences where if he made a mistake the teacher 'just put a line on that'. The focus of comments was on grammar mistakes. In high school the main comments that he remembered were about bad handwriting and the 'poorness of your English' although he also experienced comments about structure such as 'you mustn't mix your points'. In primary school Romeo remembers comments about the crossing of his 'Ts', writing short and not long sentences, grammatical mistakes, and ordering of ideas. In high school he had to rewrite grammatical errors. For Kingsize there was no rewriting: 'No, they would just point to the paragraph where you wrote wrong. They would say this is supposed to be changed to this, and they would just correct it for you'. Perhaps the experience of these learners as far as assessment

and response to their writing is concerned, can be summed up by Romeo, 'Aah they were not encouraging. I have to say that'.

The learners' experience of assessment, as outlined above, does not provide them with the scaffolded guidance they require to gain control of the various academic genres of schooling. Because the whole writing process is confined to a single draft the comments on texts are severely limited in their effect. As a result, teachers do not develop a collaborative relationship with students, a situation exacerbated by large classes, nor are they able to provide specific strategies which learners can act on to overcome communicative problems. The absence of explicit linguistic and structural criteria on the lines developed by Macken and Slade (1993) further constrains the ability of the teachers to make a meaningful contribution to their learners' control of a range of genres across the school curriculum. These crucial issues of assessment will be discussed in more detail in this chapter when data from teachers' interviews and matriculation marking practices are examined.

4.1.5 Summing up of Learners' Literate Life Histories

The overall impression gained from this examination of learners' LLHs is one that would support Luke's (1994) supposition that 'achievement in reading, writing and affiliated schools subjects is at least in part produced by inequitable and inappropriate teaching texts and assessment'(6). Furthermore there is little in their experience of writing that would be affirmed by either process or genre-base approaches to writing. What they experience does not give them confidence or a sense of voice. Thulani's remarks constantly refer to a disempowering experience: 'we not encouraged to write ... not taught how to be independent - create things for ourselves ... we usually depend on the book, depend on the teacher'. Prof sums up the effect of copying copious notes from the board with 'you can't do anything', while for Romeo 'For me I can say writing is not good'. The writing process in language classes has been confined to either copying teachers' essays and rewriting them in texts or examinations (a 'show and tell' process) or writing on a narrow range of teacher-determined topics. There is no evidence of students experiencing writing as a process nor of any teacher intervention in the different stages of writing as outlined by Coe (1986), Zamel (1985) and Callaghan et al (1993).

An analysis of their experience in language classes shows that they have only encountered an extremely narrow range of genres consisting mainly of narratives and recounts. Their only venture into other factual genres has been in the form of business letters. They have not been given any explicit guidance in the structural and linguistic conventions of narratives or recounts nor of any other genres. In content subjects their experience has been largely one of copying from books or blackboards with no explicit apprenticeship into the task demands of writing in different disciplines. While in one sense their experience has involved modeling, in that they have copied essays and texts, it is obvious that it has an extremely narrow focus which does not provide learners with the tools to explore writing for a range of purposes and audiences. Thulani, for example, does not feel he knows how to write an essay for History or, for example, to seek employment. 'We find a big problem how to write an essay because most of us don't know how to write it ... we just put it in all scattered, all of it not in a paragraph form'. It is apparent from the learners' statements that their school experience leaves pupils to 'pick up' writing by some 'osmotic' process (Martin 1989: 61). This means that the skills of writing in powerful genres are being passed on selectively in the school system as a whole, and that this experience has severe consequences in terms of what competencies these students can take into the marketplace of further education and jobs.

4.2 Triangulating Data from Other Sources

4.2.1 Interviews with Teachers

In seeking an explanation for the experience of writing summed up above it is important to investigate what teachers have to say about the teaching of writing in the school, and to examine their schooling and their training as teachers. Interviews with teachers about their LLHs, and particularly their training as teachers, provide a number of important insights into the writing experiences of learners as revealed in their LLHs. Written LLHs from teachers indicated very similar experiences to those recorded by the learners in this investigation:

In Primary school there was no free writing. From std four to std six we were given copies of three letters and one composition. There was always one formal letter for ordering books and two informal letters. One to a friend and another one

to parents. We had to memorise these letters and be able to reproduce one of them during the exams, same with the composition.

After a topic we were required to indicate a sort of planning of which our teachers did not lead us well in that aspect. One would divide a composition into paragraphs any how. Logical strategies were not introduced. Most of the time our teachers playing an active role whilst teaching. Some displaying their accuracy in pronunciation. Even when you tried to interfere the teacher's responses were so negative.

The first interview to be analysed is that of Lungisi because his LLH follows the most prevalent pattern of the majority of staff members; from school, through teachers' training colleges, to teaching in the school. Lungisi is a teacher at the school who has lived in this community since early childhood when his family moved there from Soweto. He did his primary and secondary schooling there except for his last two years when he went to another school because the community school at that stage only went up to standard eight (grade 10). He subsequently has taught there since graduating from teachers' training college. What is revealing is that as far as the development of writing was concerned his school career closely mirrored those of the learners interviewed. He remembers no extended writing in the primary school beyond the writing of short paragraphs for Zulu and English on topics such as 'My first day at school', 'My school', 'My teacher'. In content subjects they only wrote short answers and filled in answers in blank spaces. Their seemed little that was motivating about his experience of writing at school. When asked whether he remembered any thing good or bad about his experience of writing at school he replied: 'I can't say that there is this that I think it was good or that was bad, I was just doing it ... I thought I had to do it in order to succeed at school, so I was just doing it'. In high school the range of topics focused on narrative/descriptive writing, 'we were given some topics "The journey by train" you know, sometimes things that even if you have never traveled on a train (laughter) they give you that topic'. The process of writing in high school was similar to his experience in the primary school: '... you were given a topic. Right here's your topic, got to write "My first day at school", and the teacher would tell them that 'there is something called an introduction, in the introduction you must do this and this and this and through the body goes to the conclusion'. While this provided some sort of guidance to the structure of narrative genre Lungisi said that there was little useful feedback after writing: 'we used to write these, submit them, get the mark... you just got the essay back and that was the end' and he found this a demotivating experience, 'I

had not developed that interest in writing'. It was only in Biology that he experienced extended writing of a different genre, namely explanations of things like kidney functions. The teacher gave them memoranda to compare to their answers and this provided some sort of model for the students.

Dumisa went to a teachers' training college for his primary teacher's diploma and then later attended a correspondence training college to further his qualifications. In the former he remembers assignments for all the different subjects but again he felt that feedback was inadequate as they 'were focusing on the subject matter as such, not at, what can I say, writing as such' and there was no chance to rewrite on the basis of comments. In the correspondence training college lecturers provided comments and also provided guidelines at regional meetings. However, what is interesting is the way he contrasts his university experience with that of teacher training. Lungisi came to study for a B.A. degree at the local campus and did two courses, Learning, Language and Logic (3L) and Applied Language Studies (ALS) 110 which in different ways focused on academic writing development. 3L focused on the general development of students' communicative competence in an academic environment, including academic writing, while ALS 110 was a course which adopted a genre approach to the teaching of academic writing. Lungisi's comments on these two courses indicated a keen awareness of the difference between his experience in these two courses and his previous experience. 'It's different from my previous writing, you know maybe it's now because I'm now aware what is expected of me, what type of writing I must do, then I see the change ... I think if I just come here and do not do 3L I would be having a problem that I wouldn't know that I'm having'. He felt that his previous writing in teacher training was 'casual', and cited the process of redrafting after tutor comment on the first draft in both courses as crucial to the development of his 'awareness' of academic writing task demands. He stated that there should be courses like 3L and ALS for teacher training: 'I think if you could take all the teachers that are practising now that are at schools teaching now, if you can take those teachers teach them things like 3L, they will go back different teachers'. He stressed that it was the 'awareness of the importance of writing' which was not part of his teacher training experience.

Mandla (Appendix 11), a senior history teacher, confirmed Lungisi's experience of teacher

training. He had been to an elite black high school near Pinetown in Natal where he was taught by English first language speakers. His comments on teacher training college are interesting in that, with this schooling background, he found the work too simple: 'Suddenly I came to _____ where the college was taking care of the second language speakers and the assumption was that all folks weren't really used to writing, so we were going back to the basics. It was quite boring'. The types of writing they were asked to do, according to Mandla, 'would go back to the basics, telling us how to write a narrative ... They would go for those simple ones, and they would try and introduce us to discursive essays as well'. His criticism was that the work at the teachers training college was too simple, and that when he came to study at university there was no link between the types of tasks required at the two institutions. Thus it would seem that for many teachers their experience of writing in the teacher training would be one that replicated their experience of writing in school and would be characterised by limited feedback, little explicit teaching of the task demands of different genres and a focus on content rather than communicative effectiveness. Mandla, commenting on teacher training colleges, stated that they were

... the worst case because they [teachers] come there with very little writing and go to colleges, they get taught even less so and then they go back and teach our own kids. I mean at the end of the day there will be a lot of people who are ill prepared, and who are not keen to write.

This to some extent explains the practices described by learners in the LLHs. It seems that some teacher training institutions do not develop teachers' literacy skills sufficiently for them to be effective facilitators of their learners' entry into academic, or schooled literacy. Langan (1993) in his research into textbooks and their use in South African schools created a list of 'indictments' for the situation he found. One of those listed was the teacher training colleges whom he indicted for producing teachers who had little knowledge of: content subjects; educationally sound methods of teaching and learning; and appropriate reading and writing skills (141).

Teachers made a number of revealing comments about the pressures that impacted on the teaching of writing at the school. Bongani commented on the effect of poverty, stating that as one reason why so little homework was done. 'When you come home, there's no space where you can sit like this and look at your book ... Even if you want to write there is no space to write'. This comment

confirmed what one student said to me in response to a query about why she never did any homework. She travelled a long distance to get to the school because of the political violence in her area. The result was that she got up at about 5.30 am to catch two taxis to get to school and then only arrived home after school at about 5.00pm. She said that because she was the only girl in the house, she had to fetch the water, chop the wood, cook the dinner and wash up afterwards. Only then could she start her homework under candlelight. Gladys also reported having to use candles to read by.

Both Bongani, a senior English teacher, and Mandla spoke of the effect of large classes. Bongani spoke of one year when he had five matric classes and one each in standard six and seven, totalling, by his estimation, about three hundred pupils. Mandla said that this was a reason for the lack of extended writing tasks, and the extensive use of short answer exercises, required by teachers. Both teachers related this strategy to pressures within the system, echoing the sentiments of the teacher who described the crunch-and-carry-on method as a means to satisfy authorities. Mandla said teachers favoured short exercises because ‘they can mark them very quickly, get them back to the pupils, and then give them the next exercise. So with the authorities they would be in the good books, but then pupils are going to lose out in the process’. Bongani, who was exceptional in the school in that he required his classes to write at least one letter and one essay a month, remembers a subject adviser criticising him for a lack of language exercises. It seems from these interviews that the pressure teachers felt from educational authorities pushed them towards the types of exercises that would stall their learners’ writing development in order to fulfil syllabus requirements. Mandla highlighted another pressure of large classes, namely a focus on the successful students at the expense of the weaker ones: ‘You would then see that in practice, in schools, with teachers attending to those who are showing signs of progress and then leaving the rest’. This mirrors Martin’s (1989) argument that schools tend to favour those that have the best chance of succeeding, a case of the less advantaged students getting less and less of what they need and the more advantaged getting more. There will be more discussion about teachers’ responses to these pressures when syllabuses and teacher guides are analysed.

4.2.2 The Impact of Teachers’ Response Behaviours on Student Writing

Dumisa's comment on a lack of 'awareness of the importance of writing' and Macdonald's finding of minimal reading and writing experience in the schools resonated with what emerged from students' life histories, from my observations of teaching writing and from students' discussions in dialogue journals. Students in the classes I taught showed little interest in developing the skills of writing despite the high proportion of marks that the essay paper carries in the examinations. In the 1993 and 1994 examinations the essay, on its own, counted for 70 marks out of a total of 300 for the whole English examination of three papers. My first experience of this lack of interest in writing was when I took students through an essay writing process. I involved them in generating ideas around their own topics through brainstorming and looping activities, followed by selection of ideas and planning strategies. I then gave input and exercises on essay structure and paragraphing. The students were then asked to go and write an essay using the ideas and plans that had been generated. A week later when I asked for the essays to be handed in, two revealing responses emerged. The first was that only four of the thirty four students in the class submitted their essays. Questions around this were met with a general degree of indifference. In contrast to this, students showed a great deal more interest in comprehension exercises and decontextualised, fill-in-the-blank grammar exercises. One student echoed the sentiments of the class when she wrote in her journal: 'Why are you teaching us about paragraphs? Nobody is going to ask us what is a paragraph in the exam'. They seemed to see writing essays as little more than a grammar exercise rather than a meaning-making one. Their attitude seemed to be that, as long as they could cobble together a basic narrative with as few grammatical errors as possible, then that was all they needed to know.

The second response that emerged was that two of the students had changed the original essay topics they had started with. It was interesting that they changed these topics to more conventional topics similar to those mentioned as hardy perennials in other learners' LLHs - 'My most exciting day' and 'The pen is mightier than the sword'. Discussion with the pupils indicated that they did not feel they could write an essay on a topic of their own choice about something that interested them. These attitudes indicate what the process approach would describe as lack of confidence in their own 'voice', a rather crippling unwillingness to take risks. Zamel (1985) and Lindfors (1986) provide some insights into the reasons for this and its effects on learners' written communication. Zamel researched the way teachers of ESL learners responded to their students'

writing. She found that the teachers in her study tended to view the learners' texts as 'fixed and final products' (Zamel 1985: 81) and did not give the learners an opportunity to redraft their texts on the basis of teachers' comments. She found that teachers established themselves in an authoritarian relationship to student texts and applied uniform and rigid standards to their students' writing. The result was that ESL writing teachers

misread student texts, are inconsistent in their reactions, make arbitrary corrections, write contradictory comments, provide vague prescriptions, impose abstract rules and standards, respond to texts as final products, and rarely make context-specific comments or offer specific strategies for revising the text. (ibid: 86)

Under these conditions, students are likely to believe that what they want to say is not as important as what the teachers feel they ought to say. This belief, coupled with responses which focus on surface level features of grammar and usage, would reinforce the notion that form is more important than meaning which would have a serious impact on learners' confidence in their own ideas. Furthermore, it is likely to constrain learners' willingness to experiment with language for fear of making grammatical mistakes with detrimental consequences for the development of their communicative competence. Coe (1986) and Spack (1984) emphasised the importance of teaching writers how to generate ideas without worrying about issues of form and correctness in the initial stages of the writing process, as this interfered with the communication process. The response practices of teachers that Zamel identified encourage the idea of worrying about issues of form from the outset. Coe also found that weak writers attend only to surface features of writing and not to deeper issues of communicative effectiveness. The response behaviours of the teachers in Zamel's study are thus likely to place serious barriers in the way of the learners' writing development.

Lindfors' (1986) work with a class of Zulu-speaking students in Kwa Mashu near Durban reinforces Zamel's findings on the effects of the response behaviors described above. In her observations of primary and secondary schools in Kwa Mashu and Mpumalanga she found a great deal of writing to be corrected and a total absence of communicative writing. She found fake letters for the teacher to mark; information compositions about comprehension passages;

decontextualised grammar exercises; and learners writing answers to teachers' comprehension questions about each chapter of an assigned set book. She argues that an over emphasis on form at the expense of a concern with effective communication of meaning restricts learners' ability to develop communicative competence. Furthermore, it will result in learners concentrating on avoiding mistakes and not on experimenting with language to communicate meaning. If pupils write only what they can write correctly they are unlikely to develop the ability to use writing to express beliefs, ideas, thoughts and feelings. As an exercise in communicative writing she involved a standard six class in a six-week process of daily dialogue journal writing. She found all the early entries written in simple sentences. It was only after a while when the learners realised that she was interested in their ideas and opinions and that she did not correct their grammar that they began to experiment with the language and to write more complex sentences. She found that they began to take control of the communication and to determine the topics that were discussed. The more they owned the communication the more complex their language became. Lindfors explained their early reluctance to move beyond simple sentences as the result of an emphasis on punitive marking of grammatical errors and of demotivating, inappropriate writing tasks. Zamel's and Lindfors' findings mirror what has emerged from the LLH interviews with learners and teachers in this study. As Johnson (1991) argues,

This guidance is not a therapy, aimed at making students more competent in producing clear and correct sentences, but a facilitative process, aimed at enabling them to understand the process of writing and to make them full participants in it (175).

4.2.3 Systemic Constraints: Examinations, Syllabuses and Teacher Guides

Examinations

When I asked Mandla about the reasons for pupils' lack of interest in writing and their preference for decontextualised grammar exercises, he explained it as an emphasis on examinations.

What was important as far as a number of pupils were concerned, and as far as a number of teachers - not only teachers, also the subject advisers in the DET - was exams. So all education was geared to was exams. If you can learn something, you

should come back and reproduce it without really thinking, that is all that mattered.

These sorts of comments, the attitudes displayed towards writing by students and their reports on the response behaviours of teachers prompted me to investigate the ESL matriculation essay papers and the criteria by which they are assessed. Public examinations have a ‘backwash’ effect and exert a powerful influence on schooling systems and the teaching practice within them (King & van den Berg 1993: 202, 207). They can send powerful messages that filter down through the education system about what is valued which will have a direct effect on what is taught and how it is taught. To gain first hand knowledge of these examinations I marked the English second language essay paper for two years. It is important to note that this occurred before education was brought under a single department. As such I was marking the separate examination for African ESL learners. Bonny Norton Pierce, commenting on the 1989 matric paper, noted that student writing in the matric examination is judged almost entirely on grammatical rather than communicative criteria (1990: p.7). Markers were informed that

The symbol to be awarded to matric candidates for their essay and letter is ‘dependent on the use of language’. ... Rewards for effective communication, imaginative writing, and coherent argumentation are limited to a mere 8% of the students’ global mark of essay and letter (Ibid).

In my own experience of matric marking over two years, 34 out of 70 marks were for vocabulary and language use, a further 16 for organization, and 20 for content and these different elements tended to be evaluated as separate entities (Appendix 12). This assessment practice is far removed from that of the genre approach which develops criteria for effective writing in different genres along the dimensions of genre, tenor, field and mode. This creates a contextualised and functional view of language as inextricably bound up with the purpose and audience of a text. Effective communication of meaning is given relatively minor importance in the examination and, given the filter-down effect of examinations on teaching methodology, it appears that there is a legacy which would encourage teachers to focus writing classes on teaching decontextualised grammatical structures. This would to some extent explain the attitudes to writing of both teachers and students I have encountered. It is an example of the way in which the ‘pressures of the system’ have shaped attitudes to, and conceptions of, writing. Thulani’s comments on the

assessment and response practices of teachers confirm this interpretation: ‘we were not informed about how we must put ideas’; ‘we have no idea of what strategies we must use’; ‘when she marked it she didn’t complain that we used the wrong tactic to write the essay’; ‘the teacher will comment about the idea that the ideas are scattered all over the composition but the solution how to arrange those ideas will not come...’. From Thulani’s and other literate life histories it seemed that comments focussed almost exclusively on surface issues such as spelling with a summative ‘comment’ in the form of a mark at the end. There is thus little in their experience of linguistically principled, criterion-referenced assessment where comments were diagnostic and formative. It seems students were given little guidance in the criteria for effective communication across different genres and are thus denied access to language as a meaning-making resource.

Another important consideration in examinations is the range of genres that students are asked to respond to in the composition examination. In the one examination (Appendix 13), using Martin’s (1989) categorisation of narrative and factual genres, the breakdown of the six essay questions was as follows:

- one essay topic which could be answered either as an explanation or exposition
- one topic that required explanation
- four topics that were largely narrative. One of these four involved a character sketch and another involved responding to a picture about, or description of, what pupils did to earn money.

In the second examination that I was involved in the division was the same, one expository essay, one explanation, and four narratives (Appendix 14). In their mother-tongue Zulu essay paper students were given a choice of six rather ambiguous topics. The topics were a set of statements without any direction words supplied to the students (Appendix 15). The translations for these essay topics are:

- a. The Habits of the Glamorous
- b. An Honourable Alcoholic
- c. An Unreasoning Community
- d. Ideas of Birth Control

e. The Mushrooming of Informal Settlements

It is difficult to categorise these topics, and it must have been difficult for students to decide what was required of them. Only 'e' could be described as expository as it stands, with 'd' either descriptive or expository. The rest could best be described as descriptive. In the English examination what was illuminating was pupils' choices. In the 1994 examination, out of 2000 pupils I recorded, 1351 (67.6%) chose narrative essays. This indicates an overwhelming focus on narrative writing. What was also of interest was that many who chose the expository essay, which asked pupils to discuss problems of the taxi industry and suggest solutions, either turned it into a narrative or a chronicle of problems. Presenting an argument around solutions was generally poorly handled. As far as genre was concerned, the examination foregrounded narratives and the indications were that pupils were poorly equipped to handle the task demands of expository writing.

Other aspects of the examination were also a cause for concern, especially for ESL learners. Candidates were given only one and a half hours to write both a composition and a letter. This gives very little time for proper planning and would seem to encourage the view that essay writing is a 'one-off' process not requiring drafting, planning, reformulation and editing. This impression was confirmed either by the total absence of any planning by students on a page set aside for it, or by the very sketchy and unhelpful plans that predominated. This is reflected in Thulani's description of his essay writing strategy: 'Just write the topic and then write it right through, write the ideas until I finished'.

The matriculation examination sends important messages to teachers about what they should be aiming for. The message seems to be that essay writing is a hasty one-off process where attention to form is most important and where a focus on narrative is sufficient. The content of the examination does not encourage teachers and learners to engage with a variety of different genres. Similarly there is little in the assessment instructions that could be described as criterion-referenced or linguistically principled which would impel teachers and learners to engage with the structural and linguistic conventions related to achieving different communicative purposes effectively. This analysis provides some explanations of why these students will leave school with little control of genres that are powerful in society and why they see writing as of minor

importance.

These conclusions are confirmed by an analysis of the internal examinations in the school. The grade 11 English essay examination (Appendix 16) contains a choice of five narrative/descriptive essays. In one and a half hours students are required to write an essay (50 marks), one piece of informal writing (20 marks), and another of formal writing (20). Across a range of other grade 11 subjects, namely, history, business economics, biology and geography, students were not asked to write any extended answers at all (Appendix 17 for an example of a Geography examination). Thus students get no experience of writing in the dominant genres of the different disciplines. The dominant question-types are: multiple choice; fill-in-the-blank; identifying parts of diagrams; matching columns; explanation of terms such as 'democracy'; true or false questions. The consequence of this sort of practice is that these learners are not adequately prepared for the demands of matriculation examinations, tertiary education, or the world of work. This is similar to the situation described by Martin (1993b) where he described the syllabuses and textbooks of junior secondary schools in Australia as providing insufficient preparation to cope with the literacy demands of different subjects in the senior secondary school. The history teacher in the school described how various constraints resulted in him providing copious notes for his pupils to copy from the blackboard. He acknowledged that, as a result, when students wrote examinations which required them to evaluate, explain or discuss, the students tended to write chronological accounts in note form using the model provided for them in the classroom. This was confirmed for me when I was asked to conduct writing workshops with standard ten (grade 12) students. It quickly became apparent that they had no idea what these direction words (evaluate, explain, discuss) meant and had not experienced writing for these purposes. They were thus ill equipped to deal with the demands of the history examination topics such as:

"The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan were two halves of the same walnut"

With reference to the above *evaluate* (my italics) USA policy in the period 1945 to 1949.

Syllabuses

English Syllabuses

A second area of investigation that throws light on to the reasons for the low status of writing in

the school is how official documents such as syllabuses and teacher guides position writing. An analysis of these documents would indicate what role they provide for writing and what guidance they give teachers around the teaching of writing. These would obviously impact on the way in which teachers conceptualise the role of writing and would thus, in turn, affect the attitudes of learners to writing. Johnson (1991) argues that the crucial role of writing in the development of a critical literacy is ignored in traditional language syllabuses and also marginalised in initiatives to develop an emancipatory theory of language such as the People's Education initiative of the National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC) in South Africa in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He characterises traditional language syllabuses in South Africa as aimed at the production of a fundamentalist functional literacy by an overemphasis on linguistic accuracy at the expense of 'the creation of meaning and the expression of understanding' (178). As a result, the importance of writing as a tool for effective communication and interaction with the world is not foregrounded in South African schools. Johnson describes writing in South African schools as characterised by:

- the production of isolated exercises based on a narrow curriculum;
- norm-referenced assessment which focuses primarily on surface features of texts such as syntax, spelling and punctuation and not on 'different levels of text' (178);
- a pattern of one-off, 'write-react' processes whereby the teacher allocates the task the time frame for the task, and the mark to be allocated;
- the teaching of writing dominated by a focus on grammar;
- a belief amongst learners that their writing is 'good' when it provides the answers that the teacher seeks which results in writing which attempts to cram in as many rote-learned 'facts' as possible;
- and a narrow focus on writing with the teacher as the audience, and a grade the only purpose for writing.

Johnson found that even in the syllabus proposals of the People's English Commission (PEC) of the NECC 'the central role of writing in achieving a critical literacy is neglected' (174). The PEC, in opposition to both the state education approaches of the time and to the liberal communicative competence approach of the international ESL/EFL industry, posited the notion of language competence as inextricably linked to the knowledge of the social and political context in which

language functions. Thus the proposals for People's English foreground the importance of making learners critical users of the language. However, Johnson found that the emphasis was on critical reading of texts while writing was given a far less explicit role. In the first proposal of the People's English Commission writing is not mentioned:

People's English intends to assist all learners to understand the evils of apartheid and to think and speak in non-racial, non-sexist and non-elitist ways (Saspu National, 1987:29)

Johnson feels that this neglect of writing in syllabuses indicates a lack of awareness of the differences between writing and speaking as language processes. Writing is a far more demanding and complex process, as the genre approach argues. If syllabuses make the assumption that being able to think and speak in a particular way naturally results in being able to write in the same way, they are likely to lead to neglect of explicit teaching of writing, and a reduction of the role of writing in learners' school experience. It would thus be important to examine official syllabuses and guides to teachers for an understanding of how the teaching of writing is presented. This, in turn, would provide some explanation for teachers' and learners' attitudes and approaches to writing.

The English syllabuses that teachers at the school had access to stress that they are based on principles of communicative language teaching (Appendix 18). This is explained briefly under general teaching approach as: creating a climate for communicating with 'interest, purpose and enjoyment'; seeing language in relation to context (audience, purpose and circumstance); going beyond syllabus specifications to foster pupil awareness of 'the many kinds of language and ways of using them'; and a special emphasis on encouraging risk taking and experimentation with language, and only correcting learners '*when their choice or use of language is inappropriate*'. Under general aims it states that the syllabus aims to 'enable pupils to communicate successfully for personal, social and educational and occupational purposes'. As far as writing is concerned the general aims are to develop pupils' ability 'to write English appropriate to their purposes'. Other general policy issues relevant to this study are remedial work and the allocation of periods for different aspects of the syllabus. For remedial work teachers are urged to pay special attention to errors arising 'from ignorance of English idiom'. Teachers should make note of these errors and devise special exercises to correct them. The allocation of weekly English periods is suggested

as follows:

Aural work (including listening comprehension and speech training)	1
Reading (prose and poetry) and comprehension	1 or 2
Language study	
Oral	1
Written exercises	1
General oral and written work:	
Conversation	
Oral preparation for written work	2/3 periods
Written work	

In the description of syllabus content the documents separate the different language skills into aural, oral, reading and writing. The writing section states that oral, aural and reading activities should form the basis of writing, and that work done in language study, reading, aural and oral should be followed by regular ‘written exercises’. What is meant by written exercises could mean anything from sentence construction exercises, substitution tables, supplying of missing words, phrases and clauses, through paragraph construction exercises to comprehension exercises and guided narrative and descriptive essays. The content of the writing section indicates a building block approach moving from sentence construction to paragraphs, to compositions and letters. Included in the writing section is: practice in completing forms, comprehension exercises, assignments on prescribed books, spelling, punctuation, and a detailed list of language components to be covered such as auxiliaries, pronouns, sequence of tenses etc. In fact, in the section on writing, only three subsections deal with writing beyond the sentence level, whereas there are thirty four subsections detailing grammatical structures and comprehension exercises. No mention is made of linking grammatical constructions to purpose, audience and circumstance (genre) of texts as SFG and the genre approach would suggest.

Assessment and evaluation in standard seven (grade 9) divides the year mark into an oral mark which counts 50% and the other 50% is made up of a minimum of eight tests over the year which must be ‘set on as wide a range of topics from the syllabus as possible’. The written examination should consist of one two-and-a-half-hour paper in which a ‘narrative or descriptive’ piece of writing would count for 50 (25%) of the two hundred marks for the examination. The rest of the examination is made up of comprehension (40 marks); language questions based on the

comprehension (30 marks); general language questions (20 marks) and literature questions (60 marks). There is a curious discrepancy between what marks are allocated during the year for extended writing and the marks allocated in the examination. There is every possibility for teachers to interpret 'tests' as excluding essays and, given the findings of the research mentioned earlier and my own observations and experience, it is more likely that these tests would be made up of grammar and comprehension exercises, and tests on literature networks. There is also no provision in the syllabus suggestions for an accumulated mark for the year to be allocated for extended writing as there is for oral work. Furthermore, there is little likelihood that much preparation will be done for essay writing in the examination and this provides an explanation for the practice mentioned in learners' LLHs of copying essays and letters from the board and memorising them for the examination. It also suggests one reason why essay writing is not seen as important by both teachers and learners.

Content Subject Syllabuses: Geography

Pre-1996 syllabuses from the content subjects of Geography, History and Science reveal an implicit reference to the importance of control of genres specific to those disciplines. In the geography syllabus (Appendix 19), for example, the general aims focus on content and attitudes, for example:

- To draw attention to unity and diversity in the world, and the resultant interdependence of regions and nations.
- To develop intellectual aptitudes and awaken "geographical curiosity".
- To develop tolerance of attitudes by assisting pupils to recognise and understand the problems of their own and other countries, and how local circumstances can influence man's [sic] ways of life.

In the specific aims there are two indirect references to writing geographical texts. These are:

- To acquire a basic geographical vocabulary which will assist pupils to write explanations clearly, correctly and precisely.
- To explain the interaction of human and natural agencies.

The first specific aim foregrounds the acquisition of vocabulary as a tool for the writing of

effective explanations, while the second provides no information or examples of geographical explanations to guide the teacher as to what is required of learners. There is little to encourage Geography teachers to focus attention on the structural and grammatical conventions of geographical genres.

In the section on the exposition of syllabus content, which is divided into subsections under the headings: general geographical techniques, climatology, geomorphology, population geography and regional geography, the overwhelming focus is on the activities that learners are required to do. There is no mention of how these activities are to be communicated, or the written genres specific to geographical enquiry that learners need to be exposed to and gain control of. Under regional geography there is mention of the need to do 'at least individual research assignments', on topics such as 'The story of rubber', 'The wonders of modern transport', 'The Coffee industry of Brazil and the R.S.A.'. There is little information from the syllabus to guide the teacher on the geographical genres which would realise the aims of geography mentioned earlier. As these assignment topics stand they could easily be interpreted as requiring only descriptive and recounting skills.

In the section on evaluation, the Geography syllabus has a class mark counting a third of the total marks and consisting of eight tests and the assignment(s). The examination, counting two thirds, consists of a 'compulsory section of short objective questions', a compulsory question on general geographical techniques, and then questions on climatology, geomorphology, population geography, and regional geography. There is no mention of the types of questions to be set, but judging from the comments by pupils they were not required to do anything beyond short answers and paragraphs. The examinations and syllabus thus do not foreground extended writing and are likely to encourage teachers to focus on one word, one sentence, and at the most, single paragraph pieces of writing. Consequently, while teachers are encouraged to involve learners in many geographical activities there is little to support them in developing learners' abilities and expertise to be effective written communicators about their geographical experiences. Prof's descriptions, and my observations of his experiences in the Geography class, would confirm this assessment.

Wignell et al (1993) in analysing the discourse of geography maintain that it fulfils three

functions, namely, observing and describing; grouping and classifying; and lastly analysing and explaining. They summarise the geographer's task as 'observing, ordering and explaining the experiential world'(136) and argue that the discourse of geography uses language in three distinctive ways which correspond to these three purposes. Their analysis shows

... that the discourse of geography observes the world by setting up a technical lexis; that it orders the world by arranging these terms into taxonomies; and that it explains the world through the implication sequences of cause and effect (165).

While the aims of the syllabus described above imply these aspects of geographical discourse as analysed by Wignell et al, there is no explicit reference to these discourse elements in the syllabus, and the need for teachers to develop control of them in their learners. The way the assessment of student work over the year is described also mitigates against learners experiencing the geographical genres that would enable them to communicate effectively in the field. This is particularly important since Wignell et al emphasise that geography is about the 'interrelationships between terms in taxonomies' (165) but that, unlike the natural sciences, these taxonomies are seldom made explicit: 'The relationship between terms has to be extracted from the text. Thus the student has not only to find order and meaning in the natural world, but also has to uncover the order and meaning latent in the discourse of geography' (165). These difficulties are further exacerbated when the emphases of both syllabuses and textbooks do not provide the experiences that would enable the development of academic literacy in different disciplines. Martin (1993) sees Australian science syllabuses as foregrounding doing (observing and experimenting) and backgrounding written language experiences of reporting and explaining. Furthermore, junior secondary syllabuses recommend writing science through science fiction stories, personal reports, plays, poems and cartoons. This, he feels, is inadequate preparation for the very demanding forms of scientific writing required in the final two years of secondary school. He also points to the danger of textbooks that, in attempting to make science more accessible, background science literacy. By doing this they do not give learners access to the scientific lexis that has developed in science to construct its alternative world view.

To rehabilitate literacy in science teachers and students will have to work towards a much clearer grasp of the function of language as technology in building up a scientific picture

of the world. Technical language has evolved in order to classify, decompose and explain. The major scientific genres - report, explanation and experiment - have evolved to structure texts which document a scientist's world view. The functionality of these genres and the technicality they contain cannot be avoided; it has to be dealt with. To deal with it teachers need an understanding of the structure of the genres and the grammar of technicality (Martin 1993b:202).

The geography syllabus described above also emphasises activities (doing) at the expense of a focus on effective writing in the genres specific to the field of geography. The widespread copying from the board across different disciplines mentioned by the students and observed by the researcher indicates that textbooks will not play a role in helping teachers and learners develop an understanding of the structure of important genres nor with the grammatical realisations of the communicative purposes those genres fulfil.

An example of syllabus which begins to focus more on the communicative skills related to a particular discipline is the interim core syllabus and guidelines developed for geography in 1996 (Appendix 20). It presents the syllabus in a grid format with headings which beside the content highlight 'concepts and generalisations'; 'skills, processes, attitudes, values'; 'objectives: pupils should be able to'; and 'suggested methods'. For example, for the topic of global warming the concepts and generalisations that learners would have to come to terms with would be 'terrestrial radiation', 'pollution dome' and 'green house effect'. To explore this topic effectively pupils should be able to (my italics):

- *explain* the concepts: green house effect and global warming
- *state* and *describe* the causes of global warming
- *evaluate* the impact of global warming on people, economic activities and ecosystems
- *state/suggest* measures implemented to control global warming.

This focus on these sorts of objectives highlights the type of things learners should be able to *do* with their knowledge and what genre they will require to communicate their knowledge effectively in the field of geography. The legacy left by previous syllabuses, examinations and teaching practices would require a massive effort of pre- and in-service training to bring about the necessary changes in classroom practice. The development of curriculum 2005 in South Africa with its focus on Outcomes Based Education presents an opportunity to build on the type of

initiatives described in the 1996 geography syllabus but this will be discussed more fully in the conclusions and implications of this investigation.

Teacher Guides

Another document available to teachers is a ‘work programme’ which provides guidelines on how the teaching of English should take place within a ‘scheme of work’ (Appendix 21). It is divided into 16 fortnightly units covering a total of 32 weeks teaching time. An example, the first unit, is set out for teachers and they are instructed to follow the same pattern for each unit regarding the division of periods and the approach. In the preamble before the description of a unit, the document discusses literature study, remedial work, written work/homework, and tests and examinations. It is interesting that written work is bracketed with homework and that the first statement under this heading is that ‘Oral work should occupy at least 75% of teaching time in every period’. The second statement maintains that written work is best done as homework for 10-15 minutes a day and that frequent short exercises are most effective for teaching pupils ‘to work on their own and to think independently’. As far as marking of written work is concerned, the document urges regular marking. Straightforward language exercises should be marked by the pupils and, in a rather confusing statement, ‘Paragraphs, accounts, reports, narratives, descriptions, letters etc. *should be marked selectively*’ (my emphasis). The overall message from this sort of guide is that oral work is of overriding importance, and that written work is a brief addendum to be tacked on at the end. The emphasis on short written exercises is certain to be interpreted as mainly language exercises with no attention paid to extended writing.

The description of the first basic unit of 12 periods indicates an attempt to develop a type of theme teaching. These units are linked to approved textbooks and they start pupils talking ‘freely’ about pictures in the textbook and about the central theme of the chapter. The main language structure of the theme passage is introduced and the guide provides a list of the language components ‘on which the work in the different units must be based’. The following is a summary of the unit:

- Period 2: Selected sentences from the theme passage are revised to illustrate the central language structure of the unit and it is subsequently drilled.
- Period 3: Structure manipulation and transformation drills which are followed by

- written exercises.
- Period 4, 5 & 6: This consists of literature study and reading where comprehension is tested orally and defined tasks are set around the ongoing study of the setwork.
- Period 7: Assorted language exercises are done in relation to remedial work around common errors that emerge from the previous work.
- Period 8: Dialogues based on the main language structure are introduced, memorised and acted in the classroom. Pupils are encouraged to produce their own dialogues around the theme language structure.
- Period 9: Comprehension passages must be done every alternate unit, otherwise general remedial language exercises should be done.
- Period 10: Literature study as in periods 4-6.
- Period 11: Oral discussions should take place based on the central theme of the passage and the literature study. These will be preparation for the written composition period.
- Period 12: The period for written composition is seen as the culmination of the work done throughout the unit. The written work described includes:
- joining, extension, construction and completion of sentences
 - arranging sentences to construct a paragraph
 - short accounts, reports, summaries
 - guided compositions
 - short narratives and descriptions
 - letters
 - telegrams
 - practice in completing forms

An analysis of these documents highlights a number of important issues. The first issue surrounds the emphasis on the communicative approach to language (CLT) in the syllabus. CLT is a blanket term encompassing approaches that emphasise the importance of involving learners in meaningful communication. These activities should encourage learners to interpret, express and negotiate meaning in different contexts with different audiences. It is premised on the notion of the need to develop ‘communicative competence’ in a language. Communicative competence incorporates a number of different competencies. These are:

- sociolinguistic competence (the ability to produce utterances appropriate to a particular context);
- discourse competence (the ability to produce coherent spoken and written discourse beyond the sentence level);
- strategic competence (the ability to use every verbal and non-verbal strategy available to one

- to achieve a communicative purpose); and
- linguistic competence (knowledge of the grammatical rules of language).

CLT therefore signalled a challenge to traditional and behaviorist approaches to language teaching, as it foregrounded acquisition of a language through authentic experience rather than learning of a language. It also went beyond a focus on linguistic competence to a wider notion of competence, incorporating communication that is appropriate in context.

There are a number of key features of CLT which will be briefly described here. They are that:

- learners are involved in activities which reflect real-life, authentic communicative situations for real communication purposes;
- learners are more actively involved in communication while teachers play a more facilitative and monitoring role.

Harmer(1991:50) established a number of criteria for the design and implementation of communicative activities which could be contrasted to non-communicative activities. These are illustrated in the following table:

Non-Communicative Activities	Communicative Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• no communicative desire• no communicative purpose• focus on form not content• one language item• teacher intervention• materials control	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a desire to communicate• a communicative purpose• a focus on content not form• variety of language• no teacher intervention• no materials control

A great deal of confusion exists around the meaning of CLT and its implications for methodology. The most prevalent misconceptions are that it means no teaching of grammar, and that the teacher plays a background role. This stems from misunderstandings about Harmer’s criteria because they only apply while the communicative activity is taking place. The teacher is still responsible for preparing learners for the activity, for monitoring students during the activity and for post-activity teaching. Both pre- and post-activity teaching would incorporate teaching and practise of language components relevant to the activity. As far as the teaching of writing is concerned CLT would

imply a focus on writing for a variety of real purposes and audiences; the development of an awareness of how context impacted on the grammar and structure of the writing; and certainly would be accommodated by both process and genre approaches to the teaching of writing.

In terms of the purposes of this study the syllabuses and work programmes present an incoherent message to teachers about the teaching of language and writing. On the one hand, the syllabus aims and perspectives present ideas in keeping with CLT: the notion of developing communicative competence for ‘personal, social, educational and occupational purposes’; encouraging teachers to develop a risk-taking environment where pupils can use English with ‘interest, purpose and enjoyment’; and emphasising the relation between language and context. On the other hand, the way the syllabuses and work programmes are set out would provide contradictory messages to teachers about the nature of CLT. Firstly, the presentation of long lists of discrete language components to be covered in the syllabus; the idea that the work of the units should be based on a particular language component; and the repeated emphasis on recording errors to be used in remedial language exercises, certainly foregrounds the teaching of grammar in a way that is likely to encourage discrete, decontextualised language teaching far removed from the criteria established by Harmer. Secondly, the lock-step approach suggested in the work programme document encourages a hasty and superficial process which provides little time for the development of a meaningful communicative competence especially as far as writing is concerned. The allocation time for writing, both in the syllabus and the work programme documents, does not provide time for teaching writing as a process of refinement, nor for an exploration of genre conventions and the impact of purpose and audience on language and structure. The fact that this sort of process is to be repeated sixteen times every year creates fertile ground for a demotivating, treadmill experience aptly described by a teacher as the ‘crunch-and-carry-on-method’. This sort of process is likely to marginalise writing or reduce it to a hasty one-off and superficial process. This message is further entrenched in both the work programme document about time to be allocated to the different language skills, and in the suggested mark allocations for year marks and examinations. In the work programme it is stated that oral work should occupy at least 75% of teaching time in every period. Furthermore, writing is presented as the culmination of previous oral, reading and comprehension exercises and this is likely to suggest to teachers that writing is speech written down. There is nothing in the syllabuses and

work programmes to suggest that attention should be paid to the distinct linguistic demands of writing. In the suggested mark allocations, the emphasis on 'tests' in the documents for the year mark would encourage language and comprehension tests at the expense of practice in extended writing. It is revealing that provision is made for the development of a mark for oral over the year and not for writing. The fact that the writing of an essay is demanded in the examinations without much emphasis on writing throughout the year would further marginalise the importance of writing. It would encourage the idea, in both teachers and learners, that the essay would be more a test of grammatical correctness, rather than a test of using language to make effective meaning in a given context for a particular purpose.

The teaching practices recorded in learners' LLHs, from interviews and conversation with teachers, and observations of classroom practice, reveal little that would be considered compatible with CLT. This is not surprising, given the confusing picture presented by the syllabuses and work programmes as outlined above. Research by Ndlovu (1993) provides further insight into the situation. He investigated the implementation of the communicative approach in the secondary schools of one Pietermaritzburg circuit of the former Department of Education and Training and found serious shortcomings in the process. His findings revealed that:

- there was no training of the appointed subject adviser in the approach.
- no seminars/workshops were conducted in the circuit to introduce the approach to teachers.
- the only documents the teachers received about CLT were the syllabuses and work programmes and the departmentally approved textbooks which were divided into 16 fortnightly units as set out in the work programmes.

Ndlovu sums up the implementation process as follows:

Available evidence leads to the conclusion that the mechanisms designed for the monitoring of the innovation, the provision of needed resources, the supporting of teachers and the dealing with teacher resistance to change or any other problem known to be associated with innovations were equally inadequate (42).

These findings, coupled with the problems already outlined concerning the way the syllabus is

presented, indicate clearly why writing is marginalised in both teachers’ practice and in the perceptions of the learners about writing.

Another aspect of the syllabuses and work programmes which would encourage ‘crunch-and-carry-on’ strategies is the amount of bureaucratic clerical work and record keeping that is expected of teachers. It is also interesting to note what is foregrounded in this process and what picture this is likely to create about language teaching. In an addendum to the work programme it is stated that the specific language components that are listed for special attention in each of the 16 units require ongoing attention throughout the year. These language components should be recorded by indicating which period in a two-week unit was used to focus on the language component. This is illustrated in the diagram.

Item	Unit											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Pronouns	2				3				7			2
Idioms			3			6				2		
Antonyms	2			7			9			2		
Proverbs		5		7								9

This exemplar diagram is followed by a list of twenty-two ‘basic language structures’ for revision and consolidation. Teachers are also given a work programme document where they have to record the work done in each unit for each class under the headings: Comprehension; Language study; Writing; Oral work; Literature; Other material; Tests/Evaluation. In addition teachers are required to develop year planners, weekly and daily lesson plans for each class and subject. A teachers file is supposed to consist of the following:

- Index
- Teacher’s time table
- Summary of duties
- Subject policies (Departmental/Regional/School)
- Syllabus for subject

- Work programmes for subject (one for each standard taught)
- Year planners
- Daily lesson preparation or Regional weekly planning sheets
- Mark sheets for tests and exams
- Current tests and mark memoranda
- End of Year Examination Papers - at least two previous years
- Textbook/stationery issue control files

When one considers that teachers in the school were teaching five classes and sometimes two subjects this amounts to a considerable amount of paperwork. Commenting on the effect of this on teaching, Bongani commented that many teachers ignored most of these requirements. He chose only to use the work programme document and relied on his pupils exercise books for evidence of work covered. His rationale for this was that the extensive paperwork took time away from what he saw as the more important task of teaching reading and writing and marking extended writing tasks. He further commented that teachers under him who followed the requirements ‘to the dot’ ended up with exercise books full of grammar exercises and an essay book with one or two essays and letters:

In three months the one language exercise book would be gone, and then the kids must buy another one ... in three months you check a teacher’s work, you know, and you find the kids have only written one letter and one essay, maybe a narrative and a description - one. And only one is marked halfway through the class and the other is still untouched. There was not even a signature to say ‘No, I did see it’. And that kills me.

These observations confirm what emerged from learners’ LLHs and support the contention that the way the syllabuses and work programmes are presented would encourage a focus on decontextualised grammar exercises at the expense of time spent on the development of extended writing skills.

4.2.4 Analysis of Students’ Writing

The final source of data that is triangulated against the learners’ LLHs is an analysis of student writing. Two essays are analysed, namely, a narrative and an argument, which have been selected

as representative of the writing of the learners in standard nine (grade 11) that I taught. The writing is analysed in order to gauge how learners approach the different writing tasks to what extent they meet criteria (Appendices 1 and 22) established for these genres. This provides insight into what students have learned about writing for different purposes in the context being investigated which can be related to what emerged from learners' LLHs and the other sources of data used.

The first essay is a narrative where students were asked to write a story about 'Trust'.

At the time of this story I was a student in the University of Westville in Durban and my home is situated in Johannesburg and we were living in a flat with my friend Lisa. She was a good friend of me I was trusting her She was my best friend the person that we were sharing darkness secrets with her.

I meet her in a university her home was situated in Bophuthastwana. We were having boyfriend and they were friend we meet them in a university they were nice guys. They use to take us to cinemas, hotel etc.

The following month I decided to go home. While I was at home I phoned my friend and I found that she was with my boyfriend Lindani but I didnt suspect anything cause I trusted them and Lisa was my best friend she was the one that I tell my darkness secrets.

When I came back Lisa's boyfriend told me that Lisa and Lindani are in love they are lovers and I didnt belive it. It was like a dream to me. I thought he might tell me that he's joking but he didnt.

At later I found that he was telling me the truth cause my friend Lisa fall in pregnant and my friend come to me to make an apologies of that. She said they were just make a secret love they never thought what would happen and she take all her things and she go back to her home. And Lindani come to me for an apologies but I didnt expect that because he was going to be a father soon.

I was love Lisa and I was thought she love me as I love her but I proved that she was just pretending me. I never have a friend which I love, trust like Lisa.

In terms of the structure of narrative genre the student does provide a basic orientation>complication>resolution sequence. The reader is given the setting and the participants: two university friends sharing a flat and dating boyfriends who are also at university. The complication of a love triangle is established leading to the disappointment of a trust not reciprocated. As readers we are able to follow the activity/event sequence easily enough. Also there is use of evaluation to foreshadow events and create some expectation when the writer states that she 'didnt suspect anything cause I trusted them and Lisa was my best friend'. Other than that the narrative is rather flat.

This flatness it brought to light when one examines the text in relation to tenor. The writer has written a narrative sequence without much effort to develop the subjective world of the participants. The reader is not let into the character's motives or feelings except when she writes that the news of her friend's affair with her boyfriend was 'like a dream to me' and at the end when the reader is left with a sense of loss and betrayal. There are thus few mental processes, comment adjuncts, rhetorical questions, direct speech or exclamatives in the text.

In the field dimension the writer does create a plausible world with specific participants interacting with each other and the activity sequence is coherent in that we are able to follow the sequence of events. However, there is little effort to develop and elaborate the physical details of the world and the characters with varied, precise and discriminating vocabulary. The result is that there is little to engage the reader's interest.

In terms of mode the writer has shown some degree of control in that he has used varied beginnings to denote changes in the temporal sequence of events. The themes of each paragraph, except for paragraph 2, signal a change in the time sequence which helps narrative along. These are: 'At the time of the story'; 'The following month'; 'While I was at home'; 'When I came back'; 'At later'. However, 'The following month' is confusing because no time is established beforehand against which it can be related. There is evidence of control of a range of clause types within a sentence, for example: 'While I was at home//I phoned my friend//and I found//that she was with my boyfriend//but I didnt suspect anything//cause I trusted them...'; 'When I came back//Lisa's boyfriend told me//that Lisa and Lindani are in love...'. Besides these examples there is a reliance on simple sentences or strings of clauses linked by 'and' or 'but'.

Most students displayed basic control over the event sequence of narratives as the example above showed. However, this student's narrative writing displays other features typical of much of the students' work that I encountered. Narratives were written as rather flat statements/recounts of events with no control of the linguistic resources to engage readers in the thoughts, motives and emotions of protagonists in the narrative. Furthermore, the overwhelming impression of many essays is that they are written as tasks for marks and there is little evidence of learner engagement in the task. While this lack of interest could be attributed to the topic, the statements from

learners' LLHs about their experience of writing and the assessment of writing lends weight to the conclusion that learners perceive writing more as a grammatical exercise where the basics of a coherent narrative are all that is required.

The second essay is an example of a student's attempt to develop an argument about how the violence in South Africa should be ended through negotiations.

If we want our country to be quite & peace we must come together as grassroots of this country. We must find the cause of this violence which has gone. With many people most of them who are innocent and if we are negotiating there should be all races of this country and our leaders if anyone of them talks inflammatorily we must not rush to insult or shout at him because that can lead us to the destination of nowhere. We must sit around the table like one big family when they eat meal where there is acstsy at all events.

When negotiating each and every organisation must contribute towards the necessities of South Africa and pay homage to our leaders as they ususally do when delivering speech to their followeres, because they tolerated all the difficulties they came across with. We must treat one another as we treat our brothers an sisters. Even those who are bully or rude who want to have status by provoking leader of certain organisation we must not start to point fingers at him or hit him because that will cause violence which i hate it.

When we have finished our speech that we have descussing about we must shake hands to one another to ensure that it very nice to be together as an inhabitants of South Africa who can make this country very beautiful very attractive and our posterity may develop if we have passed away in our new South Africa in the name of negotiations.

This student shows very little control of the structural conventions of argument. Firstly, there is no clear thesis statement which expresses the point of view to be argued in the essay and which sets the boundaries for the topic. The first sentence could be taken as the thesis statement but the issue mentioned, coming together at grassroots level, is not developed consistently through the essay. The rest of the first paragraph seems to argue that people should not react violently to the inflammatory speeches of leaders. The last sentence expresses the need for people to sit round a table but exactly how this could be accomplished is not developed. There is no coherent development of claims in support of an identifiable thesis. The second paragraph introduces the notion of negotiations, but negotiation is seen as paying homage to leaders and there is no coherent link between these two propositions. The second paragraph repeats the idea of not reacting violently to provocative leaders. There is no conclusion to the argument that links back to any thesis or previous claims, there is a jumbled list of cliched calls to work together without presenting any argument for why these things should be done and how they could be

accomplished. In short, a weak argument.

As far as tenor is concerned the writer makes no use of any linguistic resources to try and create an impression of being objective. Use is made of personal reference 'we' and 'I' and there is strong modality ('must') employed throughout the text. The overall impression created by the language used is that this is speech written down. It is a highly 'verbal' text with a high incidence of conjunctions: 'if', 'which', 'because', 'when', 'and'. In the field dimension the writer does not use language which elaborates on information and does not use means other than conjunctions to establish reasoning relationships. There is no evidence of an awareness of the appropriate vocabulary related to the issue of negotiations. It is in developing a context-independent text (mode) that this student fails dramatically. There is no evidence of text and paragraph themes which are coherently developed nor are there clause themes consistent with the purpose of the text.

This essay displays all the problems that most students faced when confronted with the genre of argument. The evidence from their writing points to vague generalised injunctions to write an essay with an introduction, body and conclusion without any idea of how different purposes for writing will create texts with different beginnings, middles and ends in keeping with the purpose of that text. This text confirms what many of the students have stated about having no idea of how to put an argument together and clearly indicates that these genres are largely ignored and that little explicit teaching occurs around them.

4.3 Summary

This chapter has attempted to provide a picture of the teaching of writing in a particular school and an analysis of the factors that have shaped it. It has done so by providing insight into learners' experience of writing in the school through their literate life histories. These have revealed what types of writing they have been exposed to, how these have been taught and assessed, and what knowledge, skills and attitudes learners have developed around writing as a result. A deeper understanding of the factors that have shaped the pupils' experiences has been provided by an analysis of the contextual constraints operating on teachers, and how these impact on their attitudes to, and teaching of, writing. This has involved an investigation into teachers' training,

of examinations, syllabuses, and other official documents, to provide an explanation of the outcomes revealed by the learners' literate life histories. In this way the chapter has attempted to provide 'a descriptive and interpretive-explanatory account' (Watson-Gegeo 1988: 577) of the teaching of writing in the school. What remains is to draw conclusions from these findings in relation to the criteria established in chapter 2, and to analyse the implications for teaching, teacher training and further research that emerge from them.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Many of the conclusions have already emerged in the findings and what follows will be a summary of these using the criteria developed in chapter 2 for writing programmes that could provide ‘equality of access to cultural and economic resources’ (Luke 1994: 47). The conclusions are:

- That there is little in the writing experience of learners in the school that could be recommended. Students have little sense of, or confidence in, their own ‘voices’ and are not provided with confidence-building experiences. The whole process of writing is devalued to an exercise in correct grammar which severely limits the development of learners’ written communicative capacities. Learners’ are focussed on the production of grammatically correct texts which has been shown to limit learners’ ability to develop an understanding of language as a meaning-making resource.
- Learners in the school have no sense of writing as a process and are not exposed to different strategies for the refinement of texts. They experience writing as a one-off process that is produced for a single audience, the teacher, and for the purpose of getting a mark based largely on the correctness of their grammar. Furthermore, like the schools researched in the PEI, they do so little writing that their chances of developing appropriate literacy skills are severely limited.
- They also experience a extremely limited range of genres and are confined to narrative/descriptive writing through most of their school career. This applies across all subject disciplines where pupils’ experience is largely confined to the writing of short, often single word, answers to questions. They are thus deprived of the opportunity to communicate effectively in the specialised domains of educational learning. Where they are required to move into expository writing, for example in history matriculation examinations, they are inadequately prepared for the task. All this negatively affects their chances in school and for inclusion in tertiary education or the world of employment.

- The narrow range of genres that learners are exposed to also means that they are not explicitly taught about the relationship between the social purposes of texts and their conventional structural and linguistic realisations. While there is evidence of modelling texts, this has a narrow application and is confined to a generalised and formulaic notion of structure. Students are not taught about the relationship between contextual factors, such as field, tenor and mode and how these systematically impact on language choices. The result is that learners are not sensitised to the differences between speaking and writing. In Macken-Horarik's (1996) terms they are being confined to the domain of the everyday and not 'actively apprenticed' (272) into the field of educational, specialised knowledge. Bernstein (1996) would see this as 'unequal distribution of recognition rules' (32), and because they are unable to produce authoritative communication in a particular discourse, they do not have access to realisation rules.
- The assessment of writing in the school can be best described as arbitrary and falls far short of the linguistically principled and criterion-referenced practices developed by Macken and Slade (1993). The only criterion which seems to be uppermost in the minds of the learners is that of grammatical correctness which stems from the emphasis on grammar exercises that permeates the teaching of language. The approach to language teaching that emerges from the findings is a traditional approach characterised by decontextualised grammar exercises, copying, and revising or completing illustrative sentences. These assessment practices reflect the backwash effect of matriculation marking practices that foreground grammatical correctness at the expense of linking language for effective meaning making.
- Students do not experience sequenced course content which is based on an understanding of the interface between the domains of the everyday, the specialised and the reflexive as conceptualised by Macken-Horarik (1996). Learners are largely confined to the idea of writing as speech written down and this inhibits their ability to enter the discourses of educational knowledge and limits their chances of success in public examinations. Their disastrous matriculation results over the years bear testimony to that. This situation also impacts negatively on their ability to participate in the worlds of tertiary education and employment, let alone to act on them. Macken-Horarik's thesis that learners' ability to engage in reflection and critique (the NLG's Transformed Practice) is dependent on 'how well they have engaged in the field as a specialised domain' (249), is borne out in the findings from this research.

Students are inadequately inducted into literate knowledge and this is largely because their teachers have not been adequately inducted themselves. This is manifested in teachers' unwillingness or inability to use textbooks and results in learners' writing experience in content subjects being largely confined to copying teacher-generated notes from the board. Teachers' descriptions of their teacher training, coupled with the findings of Macdonald (1990a.b) and Langan (1993), indicate clearly the basic problems that exist in this area. Related to this problem is that of inappropriate textbooks which force teachers into translating the textbook in note form for their learners

- Systemic constraints in the form of syllabuses, teacher guides and large classes play an important role in shaping teachers' practice in the teaching of writing. Syllabuses and guides send contradictory messages to teachers about communicative language teaching which some teachers interpret to mean filling students' time with grammatical exercises. This devalues writing in the eyes of the learners who internalise the idea of writing as an exercise in grammatical correctness. The heavy bureaucratic demands made on teachers, coupled with large classes, reinforces these practices to the detriment of learners' literate development.

The overall conclusion that can be drawn from this is that learners from this school have not been provided with experiences that would enable them to develop control of a range of important genres. The result of this is that they are unlikely to develop control of educational discourse, with serious consequences for their life trajectories beyond school. In Christie's (1989) terms, this will not enable them to participate effectively in the world of further education and employment, nor will they be able to act on their world in terms of being able to bring about significant change in their lives. The findings demonstrate the validity of Luke's (1993) statement that differential achievement in reading and writing can, in part, be produced by inequitable and inappropriate teaching, texts and assessment (6).

5.2 Implications for Teaching, Teacher Training and Further Research

The central implication for teaching that arises from the conclusions is the reevaluation of the role and status of writing in the curriculum. This will involve issues of classroom practice, syllabuses, curriculum change, textbooks and pupil/teacher ratios.

- Macdonald (1990a,b) indicated that pupils in many schools experienced little reading and writing, a finding corroborated by this research. The centrality of writing in the development of higher order skills has been emphasised by many of the commentators mentioned in this research (Vygotsky 1962, Bernstein 1996, Macken-Horarik 1996). Cazden (1994) reported on the improvement in the matriculation pass rate of pupils at the Educational Programmes Centre (EPC) in Johannesburg from 76% in 1991 to 96% in 1992 and more than 30 distinctions in English in 1993. The EPC director attributed this success to an emphasis on writing:

The only thing [different in the last two years] was the students were directed through writing. We were brought up to believe, and honestly believe, that writing is not our turf at all ... We are of the oral tradition and I believe that thousands of kids that fail the 12th grade fail not because they haven't put in sufficient work to enable them to pass; they fail because writing is not in their culture, as they are not able to write as lucidly as they want.
(173-174)

Cazden summing up her experience of the programme stated that through 'many, varied writing experiences, EPC students become able to write what they know on the matric exam; and they come to believe in themselves as writers and learners' (174). These experiences and this belief was missing in the pupils interviewed for this research.

- The 'rehabilitation' of writing in the classrooms will require changes in a number of areas. Syllabuses will have to explicitly state the central role of writing and provide clear guidelines for teachers as to how this might be accomplished. This research suggests that genre-based approaches would be most appropriate in the South African context. It explicitly foregrounds the interface between the specialised domain of schooling with learners' primary discourses on the one hand, and the multi generic world of work beyond the classroom on the other. Programmes would thus have to validate learners' own discourse practices (Stein 1995), develop their confidence in their own voices, and provide explicit teaching across a range of genres in different subject disciplines. As Martin (1989) has also suggested, learners should experience writing in a range of factual genres early in their school careers to build their capacities to communicate effectively for a variety of social purposes.

- If writing is to be effectively rehabilitated in the curriculum then these changes must be unambiguous and well supported in terms of teacher development. Both this research and Ndlovu (1993) have illustrated the dangers of contradictory syllabus and teacher guides and inappropriate implementation of curriculum change. It enables teachers to maintain practices that hinder the literate development of learners. It also builds resistance to change. There is already evidence of problems with the implementation of Outcomes based Education (OBE) in South Africa as reported in newspaper reports (Natal Witness, January 12, 2000) the PEI research (Taylor and Vinjevold 1999: 273). Conversations and meetings with a language project coordinator working with teachers on the implementation of OBE have confirmed these reports. Teachers have become confused by an over emphasis on difficult concepts such as 'range statements' and have lost sight of the major issue of developing lessons and activities that achieve the desired outcomes. The PEI research states that 'most teachers continue to teach as they did before OBE, the only difference being the recording of assessment under the new curriculum' (ibid). As one of the key outcomes of the new curriculum is the development of learners' literate competence it is important that this opportunity is not lost in confusing curriculum design and implementation.
- The provision of appropriate textbooks across different subjects which exemplify the approaches mentioned above must be a priority. The prevalence of copying from the board in the absence or non-use of textbooks in the school is obviously detrimental to the learners' literate development. The PEI research indicated the importance of textbooks and teaching materials in the development of higher order skills and the knowledge base of learners. Macken-Horarik (1996) has indicated the importance of a knowledge base for the development of reflexive and critical social literacy.
- Assessment practices must be reassessed and revised at all levels of schooling and across disciplines. A linguistically principled and criterion-referenced model for effective assessment has been described in this research (Macken and Slade 1993). It enables explicit criteria to be developed which enable 'writing to be evaluated against a background knowledge of the purpose and context of a text' (211). In addition, Gee states that in order to help non-mainstream students to gain access to secondary discourses, attention should be focussed on

the development of wider and more humane concepts of 'gatekeeping' (1990: 157). This suggests that assessment practices would need to validate the discourses of all the communities represented in the classroom. Stein (1995, 1998) has provided some examples of how this might be accomplished in the South African context.

- The implications described above will, in turn, have implications for both in-service and pre-service training of teachers. As mentioned before, the conceptual knowledge of teachers needs to be developed to enable them to: use textbooks and learning materials appropriately and effectively; develop students' literacy competences in different disciplines; and provide explicit guidance into the linguistic and structural conventions of a range of genres. Teachers' own literacy competences need to be developed in order for them to provide adequate models for their learners.
- Lastly, large classes have been shown to have an extremely negative impact on the quality of literate development in the classroom. The adequate supply of appropriately trained teachers is crucial if there are to be equitable outcomes in our classrooms. The impact of redeployment and retrenchment has meant that teachers are teaching in areas they are not trained for. This and other research has indicated the detrimental effect of this on the ability of teachers to induct students into the literacy requirements of different subjects.
- A major implication for further research that emerges from the findings is research into the interface between community literate practices and that of the educational system on the lines of the research done by Heath (1983). This would enable a clearer understanding of how this interface can be equitably managed to enable community practices to be validated at the same time as providing appropriate bridging experiences into the domain of educational knowledge. This process has been shown to be crucial to the development of critical social literacy at the other end of the continuum.

This research has painted a picture of a school environment that is likely to be found across many schools in the South African context. It provides a picture of pupils involved in learning experiences that will have a significantly negative effect on their life trajectories, their chances of employment and their participation and power in society. Heath and Branscombe (1985) write about a similar situation in the American education system, where children deemed mentally

inferior were only allowed to write in single words or short phrases, and not in paragraphs or essays. They commented that,

Schooling had in essence denied writing as a form of communication to these students; in many ways, this extended denial of a channel of communication by an institution is analogous to the severe and extremely rare cases of parents who shut their children off from verbal and social interaction at birth, and prevent them from learning to talk (p.225).

The consequences of this sort of scenario in our context is that ESL students in many schools are increasingly deprived of the experiences and interactions they need to develop their literacy competences adequately. This ultimately creates inequalities within the education system with detrimental consequences for second language students. My research indicates that this inequality is evident in the development of writing where both the content, teaching methodology and assessment practices in the classrooms are depriving students of the opportunities to develop control across a broad range of powerful and important genres. As far as a *critical* social literacy is concerned there is little to suggest students are developing ‘the capacity to use text as a means for learning and decision making...or to use text to...critically assess and influence their positions..’ (Luke, 1994, p. 7). The last word should belong to one of the students, Thulani: "We know a little about writing’.

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APPENDICES

Appendices

Appendix 1: Criteria for Effective Narratives

Evaluation Questions for Effective Fairytales

Purpose: To entertain, amuse, shock, or reflect on experience

Genre

1. Is there a clear Orientation which introduces and creates a context and participants?
2. Does the story give the reader a definite sense of moving towards some endpoint whereby a problem /conflict (Complicating Action) in the experience of the characters is resolved (Resolution)?
3. Does the writer use the optional move of Evaluation effectively to foreshadow events and create expectations/tension in the reader?

Tenor

4. Does the writer make the participants and their action alive and real to the reader? Is the reader able to identify with the participants?
5. Does the writer develop the participants by:
 - the use of direct and indirect speech to reveal the thinking, feelings and motives of the characters (mental processes)?
 - use varied and explicit vocabulary to indirectly comment on events and actions?
 - create a sense of characters' responses and motives?
 - use imagery, rhetorical questions, repetitions, exclamations to build suspense, atmosphere and characterisation, and make the story alive and entertaining to the reader?

Field

6. Does the writer build up the reality of the situation by sequencing events properly and creating specific people and events (use appropriate vocabulary to describe 'doing' [material] processes)?
7. Does the writer use varied, precise and discriminating vocabulary to describe different action that enhance the story e.g. 'squeezed' instead of 'held'?
8. Does the writer use discriminating and evocative vocabulary to describe the thinking (mental) and doing (material) processes of the participants?
9. Does the writer build up a picture of the situation clearly by the use of prepositional phrases (*through the woods, under the bridge*) and adverbials (*suddenly, frantically, fearfully*).
10. Is the past tense used consistently?
11. Does the writer use language that extends, enhances and elaborates on information using a range of linking words to link sentences, clauses and ideas?

Mode

12. Has the writer created a context independent text for the events of the narrative by: using varied sentence beginnings to denote changes in the temporal sequence; and using a range of cohesive devices (conjunctions, repetition, synonyms and reference items [*she, he, the, this, those*])?

Appendix 2: Literate Life History Questions

What has writing been like for you from the time you first remember until the present?

1. What do you remember about writing before you began school? Who did reading and writing around you? What kind of reading and writing did you see happening around you in the home and for what purpose was the reading and writing being done? How did you learn to write? Did anybody in your family, or around you, help you learn to read and write? Did anybody read or tell you stories? Can you remember any of these stories?
2. What was writing like for you in the primary school? High school? What sorts of things did you write about (topics, different kinds of writing)? What did you feel about those writing tasks? How many extended writing tasks (essays, letters, reports etc) do you remember doing per year at primary and high school? How were you taught to write these different tasks? How did teachers respond to your writing? How did you feel about their responses? What did you do with their responses? When was writing really good for you in your educational experience? When was it really bad for you? Can you give explain why these experiences were good or bad?
3. Can you remember the whole process of doing a writing task in school from the time the teacher presented the task to the time you handed it in and got it back? What role did the teacher play? How did you go about tackling the tasks? What was the process like for you? When was it rewarding/exciting and when was it bad? How did other people help or hinder that process? Try and do this for both primary and secondary education.
4. Did your parents or other family members help you with your writing during you school years? How was that help given and how did you feel about it? Did anybody else help you with your writing (neighbours, relatives, friends) and how did you feel about it?
5. Where did you live and what were your schools like? What impact do you feel your schooling and where you lived have on your writing development? Where did you do your writing while you were at school? Did this place affect your writing positively and negatively? Explain.

What is writing like for you right now?

6. What kinds of writing do you do now and for what purposes? Write about a typical day and how writing fits into that day.
7. Some people say that writing is uncomfortable even distressing for them. Is this ever true for you? When? Why?
8. What would a picture of you writing where you live look like? Where do you write, when, how, with what? Do you find it a comfortable place or not?
9. What makes writing easy for you? What makes it difficult for you? What do you worry about when writing? Do you try and work out what people want when you write?

What sense do you make of your experience with writing?

10. Thinking about your past experiences of writing (especially your educational experiences) what things come to light? What things strike you as very important/noteworthy in your development as a writer?
11. What things are important to you in life? How does writing connect with what is important?
12. When you reflect back, what do you realise about schooling and its effect on you as a writer? How has the experience of writing in school been good/bad/exciting/boring/distressing/demotivating/motivating? To sum up, what things so you feel promoted

- your writing development and what hindered it?
- 13 Is there anything important that has not been covered by these questions?

Students' Literate Life Histories (Appendices 3 - 8)

Appendix 3: Extracts from an Interview with Thulani

T - Thulani

R - Researcher

Primary School

T We were not encouraged to write even composition, not taught how to be independent, how to write a composition. We just copy composition to see how composition appears. Afterwards write the same composition in a test. We are not educated how to write a composition. If you say we must write the composition. If you say we must write the composition you will see we have a problem ... are not educated how to write it. We will just want to draw the ideas before we write. We are not fully independent i how to write our things, create things for ourselves

T. They talked about [introductions] but did not make sure that we understand how to use it. They just talked, if then the teachers work is done. O.K. finished. Ya. They taught us [paragraphs] but it is taught, if the example is given the pupils just take the copied message then the teacher will explain each and every paragraph what it is about. Most children will ignore that, the teacher will just say 'you understand?' and the few people, maybe four, will say 'yes, we understand'.

T In the letter we used to be given a topic to write about the topic. We wrote to friends.

R. Did you write a composition on your own?

T. Ya, we used it, if we came back here's a topic 'How was the holiday?'

R. What types of comments were made on your writing?

T. No. only marked, given a mark if address good, organisation is good. If paragraphs are separated it would be the mark for that.

High School

R. What types of letters did you write in high school?

T. Business and informal letters.

- R. What comments were made about your letter?
T. No comments, just a mark.
- R. What compositions did you write in Standards six, seven, and eight?
T. On birthday parties, trips.
- R. Did you write about a debate?
T. No.
- R. How many compositions did you write?
T. We write one composition and write one composition in the exams, two compositions.
- R. What teaching about how to write did you get?
T. We know a little about writing. The teacher in class with a book of language we will get an exercise book on top of the desk. We just read the comprehension. After that we will just answer the question. We will not be given maybe anything, maybe like a composition to make us create something for ourselves. We usually depend on the books, depend on the teacher.
-
- R. Why do you copy notes from the board?
T. We copy because we can't put information on the head. We must know maybe to place the information. Like in the English sentence the first thing we must know is how to place the words that we might help the ideas, the meaning. The children most time they don't understand how to write in maybe like a sentence, how to put a thing in a sentence in an understandable way. That's why you may find that if you talk with the students they take time to understand what is being said because most of the time he is not talking he is just given the work, given the work. When you done the work, given the mark, finish.
-
- T. In history in those essays we were not told how a history must be written. During standard eight and seven we didn't write essays, we were just answering short questions ... [In standard nine] while we were given the topic [of history essay] we were not informed about how we must put our ideas, we just put it all scattered, all of it not in paragraph form.
- R. Why did you do that?

T. We have no idea what strategies we must use. Our writing was like the notes on the board. We done it, and when she marked it she didn't complain that we used the wrong tactic to write the essay.

R. What sort of comments did the History teacher put on your composition?

T. Just spelling, just to comment about spelling. No other things.

T. During standards six, seven and eight I didn't know that the idea must be planned according to the events that occurred. I thought if you are writing a composition you just write. If the idea you have forgotten to write it at the top, it is alright to put it on the bottom. The teacher will comment about the idea that the ideas are scattered all over the composition, but the solution how to arrange those ideas will not come because she will think that I was sort of lazy during my writing, but the knowledge of how to write it was not advised.

R. What sorts of writing do you do during a school day?

T. The notes are very much and in History we are taught then given the skeleton notes of the chapter and then the teacher asks us to make our own notes to most of the time. I make notes in History, Biology and Geography.

Second Interview with Thulani

T. It was in a assignment that we were going to go home and write it and bring it back to the teacher to be marked. Whey we were given this topic we were not informed about how we must put our ideas. We just put it on all scattered write it in write all of it not in a paragraph form. We just wrote all the information from A up to Z not in the matter of a essay. All right.

R. Now why did you do that?

T. We have no idea what must what strategy.

R. Was your writing like the notes from the board?

T. Yes.

R. Was it?

T. Yes. We do, we done it when she marked it she didn't complain that we used the

wrong pattern to write the essay and then when our when we get on to the other teachers like the English last year okay we were told that how to write a essay and then we know that we were wrong but the teachers don't get it right all the time.

I thought that if you are writing a composition you just write if the idea, if the idea that you must that you have forgotten to put on top it all right if you put it on the bottom.

R. So you didn't know you just put ideas as they come to you?

T. As they came. Yes if we were to write a composition there is no plan how I can arrange the ideas but I would take the pen to the exercise book and write the ideas and try to remember them as they come and write it and write it until I finished.

R. So what you are saying you didn't wit and plan something you just wrote you were given a topic. What did the teacher say? Just here is a topic write a composition?

T. The teacher will comment about the ideas that are scatter all over the composition but the solution how to arrange those ideas will not come because she will think that I was sort of lazy during writing of that composition but the knowledge of how to write it was not in my head.

R. But writing down ideas and things like that you are saying you actually like that you don't like it when you don't know how to do it but are you saying now you know more on how to do it.

T. Yes. Yes I have information how to plan the writing I enjoy more writing than the past because in the past I didn't know how to write the composition that's why I prefer to write the poetry than writing the compositions/letters and something like that.

R. So you find writing poetry easier?

T. Easier because you just write. Just write.

R. Why do the teachers put the notes on the board. Why do they not just say use the book? Or make own notes or something?

T. Book sometimes mentions the things that are not very much important.

R. Mmm... So?

T. The teacher will give the notes because he knows what the test means. But the important things in the writing. If we writing on the book the exercise book will be finished in 6 months. But if the teacher makes the notes for use we

- R. O.K. in a day at school you are writing notes from text books. What other writing do you do at school?
- T. Other writings.... like?
- R. Now you've got English, History, Biology and Geography.
- T. Other writing only a fake as we are studying literature. On that literature the teacher will give us the questions on the questions so that student must write the answers yes so that the teacher will know each student each will know how to or she understands it for the literature.
- R. So it is short questions on the literature?
- T. Yes.
- R. O.K. And in English and Zulu What other writing do you do there?
- T. Some compositions.
- R. What do you do in Zulu?
- T. In Zulu we do the words for the Biology how the words are pronounced all that and we do composition letters and the invitation cards and the what is it called in the meeting.
- R. Minutes of a meeting.
- T. Yes, minutes of the meeting. So how many until standard 8.
- R. You hadn't done many compositions in Zulu. You had done mainly letters.
- T. Yes, we write letters but the compositions maybe in the whole year we will write two compositions.
- R. In standard nine?
- T. Standard nine I think we wrote maybe two.
- R. And this year?
- T. This year we haven't written.

- R. How did you know how to organise your essays you said you know when you writing it wasn't a problem you knew how to organise that is 1, 2, 3. Now where did that come from?
- T. It came from the teachers we were told how to organise like this like a spider diagram.
- R. So you using that as part of your plan.
- T. Yes.
- R. O.K. Now are you saying that last year is the first time you were told really how to organise an essay.
- T. Yes. I know it last year, from last year.
- R. Now you said that first one you got last year. You didn't know how to write that history essay. Did you not enjoy that?
- T. I didn't enjoy it because that created the confusion because I will write the assignment and finish the assignment. When the assignment I had finished I know nothing about the assignment. So the teacher will ask the question and after he ask I iwll not get the answer.
- R. You first learnt to arrange points round topic in spider diagram.
- T. It was hard because the topic I just write the topic on the sheet write topic and then write right through write - write the ideas write until I finished.
- R. Where did you get those ideas from?
- T. I just remember then others I did not remember I just jump over them continue I don't know.

Appendix 4: Extracts from Interview with Gladys

G - Gladys

R - Researcher

T - Translator

R. Ah, oh, okay impatient yah, okay, so let me from there ask what do your parents do []
what did your mother do, did she work anywhere and your father what...?

G. But now they don't work because of attacking.

R. Ah the violence, okay.

G. And our life is so very bad in those times because my father is very old. He is just using his pension money to help us come to school and, what can, what and to buy groceries something like that, it is very difficult for my life. I don't enjoy this because sometimes I don't have a chance to come to school because of shortage of money, sometimes I have and we live in a very big what place.

R. Do you have electricity at your home?

G. Electricity?

R. Yah

G. No

R. So at night there is nothing you can use to read by?

G. We use candles.

R. You use candles okay, okay, alright. So let's go back in your early days. You saw your sister reading and writing, you saw her writing as well and wanted to learn to write.

G. Yes.

R. Okay, but now you didn't see your parents or anybody reading or writing.

G. No

R. No?

G. My parents are not educated.

- R. Good (sic), now when you were at primary school what reading did you do in the class can you remember, did the teacher read to you, did you read on your own, what happened?
- G. I can say she read.
- R. Did the teacher read books to you, did the teacher read stories to you?
- G. Oh yes, she he read stories for us in Zulu and in English
- R. And in English as well?
- G. Yes, maybe I was in standard three.
- R. Yah, standard three you would have started. Okay, did you do any reading yourself?
- G. Yes
- R. Where did, what did you read?
- G. I read a story about the girl whose name was Cinderella.
- R. Aha, so if you think in primary school how many books did you read on you own? Can you think, did you read a lot you think? Ten, five what? Can you remember?
- G. Maybe three or four.
- R. You don't remember. Okay. Now writing how much, what writing did you do in Zulu? What things did you write in Zulu?
- G. I write about my life and my future and my problems, yes.
- R. So that's the writing you did in Zulu?
- G. Yes.
- R. Okay. Did you write letters in Zulu?
- G. Yes.
- R. Okay. What sort of letters - friendly letters, letters to friends, aunts, what?
- G. Yes.
- R. And in English what did you write?

- G. [inaudible]
- R. Did you write any essays, did you write about your life or did you write any letters in English in primary school?
- G. No. I write my my own letter in Zulu and in English.
- R. You translate them?
- G. Yes, translate it and [inaudible] not the [inaudible] what [inaudible] not at school, at home and ...
- R. So you just did it for yourself?
- G. Yes.
- R. Not for school, the school didn't ask you to write those letters?
- G. No.
- R. Okay, so you didn't do, you didn't write any letters for school?
- G. No.
- R. Okay, you didn't write any compositions in English for school. In primary school?
- G. I did.
- R. What can you remember?
- G. Mmm, it was so many.
- R. There were many.
- G. Yes.
- R. Ah good. Can you just some just remember any type, was it was a letter, about a story or was it stories you wrote? Did you have to ask to write stories?
- G. Not stories, just a composition about myself, about my school.
- R. Mmm, so your letters your composition was describing things, you were describing yourself? You were describing, talking about your school?

G. Yes

R. Ah, okay, alright ... mmm ..

G. And about the journey I'll never forget.

R. The journey I'll never forget?

G. Yes.

R. Now did you write about a real journey or did you make up one?

G. I write about the real journey.

R. What was that journey?

G. Journey to [inaudible] to [inaudible] in ...

R. Mmm?

G. Yes, for netball games and football games.

R. Okay, so did you enjoy that writing?

G. Yes.

R. Do you enjoy writing?

G. Yes I enjoy it.

R. Why do you think you enjoy it, what makes you enjoy it?

G. I want to write every time we, we ... sometimes when I at home I think of something that had happens before, then I keep on writing that thing.

R. Oh, okay. So do you travel everyday now?

G. Yes.

R. So what time do you leave home?

G. In the morning.

R. Yah.

G. Ah, six o'clock.

- R. Six o'clock. And the time you get home?
- G. Maybe quarter to three, quarter past four
- R. Quarter past four.
- G. Yes
- R. Okay, okay. Mmm, now what, when you started in standard six was there any ...? Alright, if you think from standard six up to now, what writing have you done? Try and think about what writing you have done in Zulu, what things have you written about?
- G. From standard six?
- R. Yes, when you wrote 'this journey I'll never forget', when was that?
- G. I was in standard five.
- R. Okay, so what writing have you done in high school? Can you think of the things you've written, what compositions letters have you written?

(Gladys confers with translator in Zulu)

- T. They did them on reports on things they had read from books.
- R. Oh from books. Okay, have you ever written something like an essay on ... I saw a topic on the board yesterday 'Lobola should be paid, Lobola should not be paid'. Have you ever had to write an argument like that?
- G. No we didn't.
- R. Oh, okay. Now that, so now in Zulu or English you've only written things like reports, okay, and letters?
- G. In English.
- R. Yah, and in Zulu, what have you written? Did you write friendly letters, letters to friends or to relatives or did you write to a ... did you write to aaaa say ... a ... a company to say I don't like what you sold me, or something like that?
- G. No.
- R. None of that.

- G. I've written letters to my friends only.
- R. Were those your own letters?
- G. Yes.
- R. Not letters the school asked you to do?
- G. No.
- R. Okay, now lets forget about school for a while. What writing do you do, you say you write a diary, that's your own thing ... you write some things. Do you do any other writing, you write letters to friends?
- G. Yes.
- R. Oh, what other writing do you do for yourself , anything else? No? It doesn't matter if you don't, I just want ...
- G. Nothing.
- R. Okay, and now reading in the high school since standard six, have you done, been able to do much reading?
- G. Ah, you know in school my mind is so ... I don't know what is it maybe ... I don't know what is going on. I keep on ... I can say I'm just lazy these days, I don't know what is it
- R. Now you say it's this school why ... what's happening?
- G. I don't know why ... maybe it's high school ... I don't know ...
- R. Okay. Now in your other subjects - what other subjects do you do? You do history and Biology.
- G. Yes.
- R. Ah, what else?
- G. Geography.
- R. How much writing do you do of your own? Do you do any writing for those subjects or do you just copy from the board, or what do you do?
- G. I copy from the board and I ... I read the questions from that notes.
- R. Questions from the notes.

- G. Yes.
- R. What questions?
- G. That say history, and I read that notes and I [inaudible]
- R. You answer questions that the teacher has set?
- G. No. I do my own questions and I ah ... I keep on reading when I understand and what what is it talking about, then I answer those questions [inaudible]
- R. Okay, now I want to ask you now what, how teachers taught you how to write compositions or anything when they were teaching you in Standard six or standard seven or eight, nine. What has happened, what have they said to you. Did they teach you how to write compositions?
- G. Yes, if I can remember she said compositions should be ...
- R. Say it in Zulu if you want to.
- (Gladys speaks to translator)
- T. She was doing it in different stages [inaudible] organised each and every part of the [inaudible] one main idea.
- G. They said if you write a composition you mustn't write it as a letter ... you must write it (speaks to translator)
- T. Each composition should have a topic and what ideas you put across should be in line with the topic, and then you write it sort of formally not like when you write it casually.
- R. Okay, okay. Now in your other subjects have people, are you writing any compositions in other subjects? In history aren't you writing compositions?
- G. No
- R. Okay, in Geography or anything like that?
- G. No.
- R. Just a question. You said you were lazy about books, are you able to get books from anywhere to read?
- G. Ah, yes at my old school

- R. What, when you go home you can go and get books there?
- G. Yes.
- R. Okay, now you don't do that anymore?
- G. (laughs) No.
- R. Well maybe you should think about doing that. Let's see, we've talked about what's your early life, we've talked about high school. Okay, mmm ... so you are saying to me that you still enjoy writing, you like to write?
- G. Yes.
- R. What would you like to see happening in school about writing? If you were to teach or if you were to tell the teachers what you wanted, what would you say?
- G. (laughs) I don't know how I, how can I say to be done.

Appendix 5: Extracts from Interview with Prof.

P - Prof

R - Researcher

R. ... and in the community around you did, did you see lots of people around you using reading and writing or not?

P. Especially in my community. I started Harding, you see that area it's a rural area and people are not interested so much in reading and writing. They just do that or because there is a purpose to doing that [inaudible] they don't just do ... or maybe you can't get a person busy there reading a novel ... ahh ... when they want to write maybe they've got a problem there and in the past era they didn't get enough time to learn, they just go to anybody that can read and write and say, 'Could you please write for me this letter?', and that person will print what he or she wants to say. And that person who is given that job to write that he will write that, and after that that will be the end of of of a learning. Today they don't, especially in the rural areas, they don't see that there is a purpose of of of learning, they just thing this is a wasting of time.

R. Yah, okay, so now let's just go back to primary school. Now you were saying that teachers taught you basically how to write, to write the vowels and that sort of thing. Now I want you to think back to your primary school ... mmm what types of writing did you do in Zulu and in English, can you remember?

P. Okay, I will just little bit remember, like, ahh in primary school we, we were learn ahh they taught us how, how to write to write a friendly letter, and they have taught us how to write a composition and ahh what else? They have learnt, they have taught us how to to write a letter, I mean a telegram, a letter and that was the end of of that.

R. Alright, now how did they teach you this?

P. Well, they used to say okay now we have to do this on the board, and say you have to do, you have to copy that on the board. After that they give you a certain statement that you write a letter that goes to so and so, and it's a kind of a letter that you have to state they, will state on the board that you have to write this kind of a letter.

R. Okay, so what types of a letter? You wrote a friendly letter.

P. Ahh it's in between a friendly letter, a telegram or you write a composition.

R. Okay now what types of compositions did you do? I mean what sort of topics?

P. Ahh sort of topics like 'the day I will never forget in my life', 'my my first journey to Durban', and ahh ...

- R. Now did you write that even though you hadn't been to Durban?
- P. Well, you see at that time even if you didn't go to Durban but you were supposed to lie.
- R. To make up?
- P. Yah, yah to make it clear that you can do this.
- R. Yah, okay, so if you look back on your primary school up until standard five, how many compositions did you write in English? Okay, well let's start, how many compositions did you write in Zulu? Now a lot of students that I've spoken to said well in the primary school when they wrote a letter in Zulu they wrote the same thing in English, they wrote a composition in Zulu, they wrote the same thing in English. Is that right?
- P. Well it's ... where the school that I work it's different, like you see in my school where I was schooling in primary, like per year, because I started to write at standard, standard three, and per year we used to write about four compositions.
- R. Per year?
- P. Yah, per year, Four compositions three letters ... after that maybe one essay.
- R. What's the difference between a composition and an essay?
- P. Well you see what I say I'm getting to the [inaudible] like, okay, you see what they taught us is they say, okay, the essay, the composition especially, they've got those rules like you have to go one. The essay when you write the essay, you can put it as how you want things to be, or you put things as how they, we be by your arguments, like when you put a speech in a way of writing this paragraph.
- R. You mean in an essay it's like [inaudible]
- P. Yes.
- R. So what topic would you write in an essay?
- P. Like as others said in English, well, 'the school that I like'. You see you have to put some arguments and after that you put some, some examples and you put some facts around that yah. And after that maybe a composition is like you want to analyse something and you go straight to that, and you don't put any fact or arguments on that, yah.
- R. So a composition is seen as more of a story?
- P. Yah.

- R. Okay, alright, so you would say in Zulu you write four compositions a year and, say, three letters?
- P. Yes three letters.
- R. And in English also another four, or what?
- P. In English it was maybe three letters and two compositions.
- R. Two compositions, okay. Alright, that was a fair amount of writing over you primary school year. Okay, no ... when you came to high school here what happened in terms of essay and letter writing?
- P. Okay, when I came to school life was sensible, no difference from primary, 'cause when I came to school I was told to be responsible and when I've given that work I have to do it at that time. And they had taught me to write some special essays where you have to go and research before you write. And we used to write some letters, just the letters were the same as primary, but when you wanted to do a composition or an essay you have to go and do some research to the different people, and after that you have to write your essay. And what I've learnt again is how to write a dialogue, this is what I learnt and ah I've learnt how to write a debate. When you want to do a debate here what do you have to do, like you have to go and do the research, like if I give you a topic say 'a man is better than a woman', or maybe if I say 'a man is not a man without a woman', so then if I want to do that, the argument with that, I have to go and do the research both sides, the mans and the woman's, and I come back with my facts. And I'll see to my opponent what they will say.
- R. Now you're talking about debates, talking about opponents. Now did you speak the debates or did you write them?
- P. Well I've done a debate once I was doing standard seven, yes, I was doing standard seven when we got a talk. That was saying 'a man is not a man without a woman', and I made a mistake in that, though they told me cause I had done some research on [inaudible] side, and I came back with that, but I've tried and it was more difficult because I didn't do my research properly, yes.
- R. Okay, so now when you are saying debates did you actually write essays or compositions that with a debate in ...
- P. No I was just taking the main points and I would work on them step by step. I was not just writing.
- R. But now was this an essay topic that was just set, or was it to prepare for an oral debate?
- P. It was, it was you see no, I was just giving you an example for that topic, but the topic

says 'a man is not a man without the woman', it was a debate topic.

R. Okay, so you haven't actually had an essay topic where you had to write a composition saying argue for this point?

P. Yes.

R. You haven't had that.

P. No, no.

R. Okay, so how many essays have you written in Zulu and how many in English in the year since you've been in [school X]?

P. Probably, in Standard seven I when I can remember properly I've made we ... two essays in Zulu, and in English it was only one. After that I don't remember.

R. And the letters?

P. The letters were quite a lot 'cause it's about six or seven letters.

R. Okay, and in Standard eight?

P. Standard eight, nothing. It was just three, because nothing was new, we just stayed at the [inaudible] ... basically we were forced to stay with the language, we had to push the language.

R. So you didn't do any, you didn't write any compositions?

P. If I do remember, let me think, in Zulu we done two compositions two, two and none essay, and letters, how many, it was about three letters.

R. And in English?

P. In English, we've done only one letter and two compositions.

R. Okay, and in Standard nine?

P. Standard nine we had, we had, two compositions, one essay and four letters.

R. Is that across both, in English or in Zulu?

P. Both.

R. Okay, both. Alright, so that gives me a picture ... now how were you taught to write, what

did the teachers tell you about writing? How did you know ...?

- P. When they going to do their lesson on that you'll find when you get to the class to attend you just find it they wrote something on the board and ahh after that they will try start to try to explain what is on the board. After that they will say okay now you to do this by your own, by your own. Just maybe they will say get your own your own title and you start writing if it is a compositions. If it is a letter they will say you write a letter, maybe you write an informal letter to anybody that you can write to but you have to take this stuff that you have sawn on the board and you have to copy that as it is on the board, and you'll do your own letter.
- R. Okay, and when you write a composition what do they teach you about writing a composition?
- P. Okay, when we writing a composition then they used to give us some notes and they go on those notes. There are just some points on how to write a composition and they say okay this is the notes and you have to copy these notes. After that you have to learn, you have to know them, learn them, and practise how to write a composition.
- R. Okay, now when teachers marked your stuff what comments did they make on your on your essays, what did they say on your essays?
- P. They just ... when they put some comments they will just say maybe it just be almost perfect, or others they say you didn't learn, or you didn't study your notes. Others they say you've done a lot it's quite right it's excellent.
- R. But then if, what if they ... did they mark anything, say underline anything, or whatever.
- P. Yah, they do that like when you put some [inaudible] English on there they just, they just underline that and say that's not the right word, and when you are using maybe a difficult English word where you have to use to get the dictionary, they have to underline that and say you have to get a similar word for this word.
- R. Mm, right. Now what did you do when you got an essay back, did you have to do any corrections or things like that? Did they ask you to do that or did you have to rewrite anything or whatever?
- P. Well, on that it would depend to the teacher how the teacher worked, like if the teacher just says you have to do a correction for that, we're gonna do that. But if he says no you proceed, gonna proceed, it depends to the teacher what he or she says.
- R. Alright now, where do you write when you're at home? Do you have a place of your own that you can sit and write?
- P. No, I just sit in my room.

- R. You've got your room, okay
- P. Yah, I just sit in my room, but the problem I just lie on my bed. I have to write when I lie on the bed 'cause I don't have a table where I can [inaudible]
- R. A desk or something. So you don't write in the kitchen or the dining room or something like that?
- P. I can do them in the dining room, but the problem you see people we are a five bedroom house so then it's [inaudible] when I can do that.
- R. Have you got a room on your own?
- P. No, just in that one room.
- R. So that's your room?
- P. Yah.
- R. So you don't share it with anyone?
- P. I share it with my brother.
- R. Oh I see, okay, so your brother has to keep quiet?
- P. Yah, or maybe you have to go and watch TV.
- R. Okay, now just the other thing I want to know, when you are in other subjects what sort of writing do you do in the school. I mean I see you here and you copy from the board a lot. Does that happen in other subjects?
- P. Yah, in physics too.
- R. You copy from the board.
- P. Yah you copy from the book. Like we have a problem, like we have a shortage of textbooks.
- R. So it's because of that shortage that you have to do a lot of your writing as just point form.
- P. Yes, yes.
- R. Now you see I see you working with an earthworm. but you never sit here and cut an earthworm open.

- P. The problem is in that as people [inaudible] we have to show the teacher that we want to see how it works. The problem is, yah, we learn it with the earthworms but if we don't have, if we want to see the internal part we can't see because we don't have enough [inaudible] to do that.
- R. Enough?
- P. Enough of a policy.
- R. Okay.
- R. Like equipment, microscopes and that sort of things.
- P. Yah.
- R. We just have to theorize.
- P. Yah. I was just thinking my thinking my daughter is in primary school and they were cutting open the fish to see all the different parts. So I thought that would be nice if you could do that with the earthworm, then you could understand it more, hey?
- P. Yes.
- R. So now you don't use a textbook to study, you use your notes from here, so you spend a lot of your time writing in the subjects from the board.
- P. Yah, we spend a lot of time copying from the book, and after that teacher have to stand in front of us and explain.
- R. So you also do that in Geography. I noticed that you had some notes but you tend to seem to have ...
- P. But in Geography it's a bit of a difference because our teacher used to do some notes by her own, and she will photocopy that note and give us, and we study them on our [inaudible]
- R. Okay, I see, so the teacher's doing the notes.
- P. Yah the teacher's doing the notes 'cause they propose, how can the student do their own notes? But the problem is, you see, the students were complaining they can't do that they can't do that, it's too hard. Some of us were saying, yes we can do it, some of us can say no we can't. So the majority say we can't, so we end up saying, okay, the teachers have to do the notes.
- R. So yah, and that has happened right through your high school, notes like this for your

other subjects? And you don't, I've noticed you don't write long sort of bits of writing in your other subjects, you don't sort of write a Geography essay? You just write short answers, fill in the points at the map or that sort of thing.

- P. Yes, yes it's like in Geography we just go straight to the points, the main point that we have to do, we just summarize. Like we don't give that lot of notes that we have to write so many notes, we just do a page or two pages.
- R. Yah, you see this is a problem because you people leave here and you arrive at University and they say write a History essay, write a Geography essay.
- P. You can't do anything.
- R. No, there's no experience of that.
- P. Yah, what I say is at this time we can't blame anyone, we can't say it's apartheid era now we can say just it was a problem that we were exposed to such things like to know how to do your notes on your own. The teachers, another side we can blame the teachers to spoil us because they knew how to work and they supposed to give us the work that they've done in their colleges and in the different [inaudible] where they learn how to teach.

Appendix 6: Extracts from Interview with Romeo

R - Romeo

Q - Questioner

Primary School

- Q. What types of writing in primary school did you do in Zulu? What things did you write?
- R. We write the letter. The first thing in Zulu for me was to write a letter. In standard four when the teacher told me to write a letter.
- Q. So, in Zulu? That's the first bit of writing you did?
- R. Yes.
- Q. O.K.
- R. But on the same year we did write the English letter.
- Q. O.K. So you wrote an English and Zulu letter.
- R. And after that when I was finished of I was doing of writing a letter, then he told me to write any story about a thing I saw outside the school - then to write a full page.
- Q. So that was a composition?
- R. Yes.
- Q. So that happened in standard four.
- R. Yes.
- Q. So before that you didn't write any letters or compositions in English or Zulu?
- R. No, we didn't.
- Q. So then in Standard four how many letters did you write, in Zulu?
- R. It was too many, maybe 5 of them.
- Q. Five? And in English?
- R. The teachers not very, he was lazy, maybe write 2 or 3. I don't remember.

- Q. So what sort of letters were these?
- R. I was writing a letter to my father telling him to give me a money for buying shoes.
- Q. O.K. That kind of thing. And the compositions? You said were one about any story that you saw and is that what you wrote, sort of stories?
- R. Yes.
- Q. So in standard five was it the same thing? Or more or less or what?
- R. In standard five we write a telegram. He wanted to tell us how to write a telegram. Everything we did, do a telegram in Zulu we also do it in English.
- Q. O.K. In standard five how many letters and compositions did you write?
- R. It not letters, we write about 3 telegrams. The telegrams were new to us.
- Q. O.K. and compositions?
- R. Compositions, we write maybe two.
- Q. Two in English, two in Zulu?
- R. Yes.
- Q. O.K. So what happened when you went to high school now? You went to high school, were things different? What was different?

High School

- Q. So now, when you got to high school, what sort of writing did you do in English and Zulu?
- R. We started, we learnt about how to write a letter to order something to order a books or order a groceries.
- Q. Oh a type of business letter (R. Yes). O.K. How to order something, O.K. And how many did you write?
- R. Wrote one of them.
- Q. Just one?
- R. Just one.

- Q. So one letter in standard six and in English and in Zulu?
- R. Yes.
- Q. And Compositions?
- R. Compositions? Write too many of them, too many, maybe it was about eight. Four in English four in Zulu. If you write about 'my school' in Zulu you write about 'my school' in English.
- Q. O.K. So what were the titles? 'My School'. Can you remember any others?
- R. 'My school', 'my journey by bus'.
- Q. O.K. then, so what was different in standards seven and eight? Was it the same type of thing, or were there big differences?
- R. It was same like we are doing herein. We are writing a business letter, letter to a press. We did letter to a [inaudible]
- Q. And compositions? How many have you written this year?
- R. This year we have written in Zulu, we have written two compositions.
- Q. O.K. so compositions in class or in an exam or what?
- R. In class.
- Q. O.K. All right so two in English, two in Zulu?
- R. Yes, two in English, two in Zulu.
- Q. O.K. Now what type of writing were you asked to do in other subjects, especially in high school? What sort of things were you asked of write? Do you have to write paragraphs or do you just write short answers to something or what?
- R. In Biology? There was nothing, nothing you only write notes and the teacher will explain to us, then he will give us some classwork we must do this, do that, we must answer these questions.
- Q. To go back to English and Zulu. How were you taught to write? What would people say to you when you had to write a letter or composition? How were you taught?
- R. The teacher told me that if you write a letter to your mother you must write the address, the address where you are then when you write a date, then write your mother's name.

You do say 'dear my mother' or 'dear father'. Then you write an introduction and then tell them what you why you write this letter. This letter is about this and this, and then you conclude that you. If you musn't write your surname because your mother will already know.

Q. Now how have you been taught to write a composition?

R. They told us that if you write a composition your points must be in order, you must write. You talks about what was happening inside the classroom you are writing about the school you are talking in the paragraph, in the second paragraph you still talkingabout in the outside, inside the school. When you are talking about inside the classroom you must talk in the first paragraph, inside the classroom. In the second paragraph you must write about outside the classroom.

Q. So what is a paragraph to you? Why do you write a paragraph? What does it do in the essay?

R. I write a paragraph, I talk about this in this paragraph. O.K. in this paragraph I will show that, after that I will, if there is need to be a solution. Told us that you must write about 5 lines not about 10 to 15 lines, they said that is not a paragraph.

Q. Why is that not a paragraph?

R. Because that is like if you are writing 15 lines, that's full page. That you don't see now when did he there people put full stop in.

Q. I was just thinking back to the compositions in high school. What sort of topics did you write on?

R. It about 'my first day in the school'. Talking about when I arrive here in the morning, when I was meeting for the first time with my class teacher. Talking about your friends you met in school, then I wrote about what difficult thing that I encountered in the school.

Q. O.K. What other topics can you think that you have written in high school?

R. I can't remember.

Q. Where they mainly things like 'my school' or 'my journey by train' or 'myself', or were there things like argue or making an argument or making a debate between urban life or rural life or something like arguing for abortion or against abortion or something like that?

R. When we do that it will be the boys against the girls. We will sit in sections, sit inside that section. He will make point one, then you will say your point, then other one will say his point. Eventually we debate, but we don't write that thing.

- Q. O.K. So that's an oral debate? Yah? So you didn't write anything about it? Okay. All right. O.K. Did they mark your grammar then your language and say this is the wrong tense or anything like that?
- R. Yes, they do that, in English. But in Zulu they say they will look that my composition is in order. I write it as my teacher told me to do it. Yes, the tense, or punctuation or something like that. Yes.
- Q. So now, what do you feel about writing, do you feel it's a good thing to do, do you worry about it or what?
- R. For me I can say writing is not good.
- Q. Why?
- R. I don't like to write something, even my teacher told me write two pages, two pages of composition. That will be a difficult thing for me to do.

Appendix 7: Extracts from Interview with Roka

R - Roka

Q - Questioner

Q. What would you say about education here?

R. I think that the teachers are trying their best. The problem is with us as students because I don't think teachers are the ones who tell us that okay, you mustn't attend class, you must be absent, because what you find is that when a person is being tried to be disciplined then he or she will just say this and that swearing teachers writing, writing everywhere. Writing, swearing teachers and all those type of things and some are even writing on the walls.

Q. So why do you think that happens here?

R. I think because they are not strong to obey. We don't have rules in this school.

Q. Okay what do parents think. Don't parents play a role?

R. They do play that role but not that much. Not that much. When the meetings they come, they sit together with teachers, governing body, SRC members of the students then they try to come up with a solution. Okay, they do that in a meeting, but when it is here in school they don't do nothing.

Q. Okay, dialogues in English?

R. But we did it practical. We did not ah write it, we were just making oral.

Q. Okay. Right.

R. Letter to your friend telling him or her that, OK, during holidays I will visit you then after you came back from there how you felt, how she, ah, treated you like when you were by his or her.

Q. Now these letters you are talking about were these in English or Zulu?

R. English.

Q. Compositions?

R. Ah, the way they taught us these, a teacher will just write his own compositions giving us a picture how it must look like. Then he will ask us just go home and write about 'my township' as she has wrote on the board.

- Q. Did she also write 'the township' on the board?
- R. No, she won't write "my township", she was just giving you the structure. You must follow.
- Q. Okay, what was that structure? What can you remember about it?
- R. Mm, it was on the middle of the exercise, the page you write the introduction of the topic you introduce your topic. And she will read for us the whole, the whole composition, then she will tell us, okay, that you see this paragraph here on the introduction of this topic I am writing about, and the body, and the summary, now the conclusion of all you've said and done and there was it. 'The worst accident that you have ever come across' and she was correcting us, telling us how we should have wrote that and they always told us we musn't ask from the elders and we musn't try rush, we can see how far are you marked.
- Q. All right, did they say anything about, aah, you know 'this was interesting', 'I enjoyed what you said', that sort of thing?
- R. Aah, they were not encouraging, I have to say it.
- Q. Okay, so now I am getting this right, for standards three, four and five you wrote four essays in a year or four things it could be a dialogue it could be a letter, it could be a composition.
- R. Yes.
- Q. So that's in Zulu. All right what happened in English? What did you write in English in that time?
- R. The same thing that applies to Zulu. What I noticed was that teachers here in [school X] they were teaching just that same way. No teacher will say 'this teacher is good' is good 'also the other one is good'. They were just doing the same thing in my standard, I don't know in other standards, but as far as I was concerned.
- Q. So you are trying to say that every year you did the same thing? You were taught the same things about compositions, about writing?
- R. Ya, in standard four in Zulu I will be taught the same way that as I have been taught in English. It will differ that the languages are not the same but, if you can translate what is written in English to Zulu, you will find that these are similar things.
- Q. So how many, how many bits of writing did you do in English then?
- R. Also we did spelling and abbreviations, also doing the opposites, we were given names

and write the opposite of that and that.

Q. You remember being taught more grammar than writing?

R. Ya.

Q. So the writing, composition, you wrote many?

R. Compositions?

Q. Yes.

R. Mmm... four about four the same sort of thing - yes the same. Or could be a composition be a letter, a dialogue, that's one term approximately. One a term.

Q. And the way they commented on your writing. You know, what sort of comments they made, was it the same?

R. You know I have to say this. What they commented about was only the bad handwriting.

Q. The bad handwriting?

R. Only as far as I can remember.

Q. But you didn't write anything?

R. Ya, she was telling us, showing us on the board, and then you write she is writing on the board you also do the same and that's how we did it.

Q. How many did you actually write yourself? That's what I want you to think of.

R. In lower primary or primary?

Q. No, in high school.

R. Oh, in high school. One.

Q. One a year?

R. Ya, that I wrote by myself. Okay, I can say two because the one you write during exams.

Q. Okay, exams is the one.

R. Ya, and the one that you do in class.

- Q. Now, then I am saying you writing something it could be a letter or a dialogue or what was it, a real composition like, ah. 'my pet' or something like that?
- R. Ya, it was something like that.
- Q. A real composition?
- R. Ya.
- Q. So you write one composition a year and how many letters. Did you write any letters?
- R. Two, or three letters.
- Q. That you actually wrote. Three letters a year?
- R. Ya, not actually you, ah, you were taught to write. You were taught how to write three letters, a business letter, informal letter, formal letter.
- Q. And you didn't actually write them, you were just shown how to write.
- R. Ya, this how you write it. You didn't write it on your own and show it to the teacher.
- Q. And what sort of topics can you think of that you wrote?
- R. Ah, 'that day I'll never forget' and 'the journey by train' and, ah, 'the accident' and 'the school that I would like'.
- Q. When you wrote a composition, what marks or what comments did teachers make on the compositions that you wrote. What did they mark? Did they make any comments or did they underline?
- R. Ya, here in high school they make some comments about your English, the poorness of your English, the way of handwriting, because they always tell us about handwriting. We will have a problem if your handwriting is not clearly seen because you find that during your matric, when they are marking there in Pretoria, you may get that there is someone who can't tolerate bad handwriting.
- Q. Okay, so they didn't say, did they say anything like 'I think your ideas are good' or ...?
- R. Ya, they did that, they did that. They told us you musn't mix your points. Say you are given a topic 'my school' you must first do a mind map. You write 'my school' you write a circle then you write under part topics. In school I will write about teachers, pupils, ah pupils' behaviour. I will talk about classrooms, talk about this and that in school then you divide into sub-topics, and then your first paragraph must be about teachers. The second must be about pupils, as you did on your mind map.

- Q. Okay so they were teaching you something about structure of an essay. Okay, but it looks like you didn't write anything like a debate or argument.
- R. No, we didn't. We did that orally. But no, I can't say we did orally because I was also in a debate when a school from Empangeni came to visit here. Then we were chosen to debate about a rural life and urban life.
- Q. If I looked at English and Zulu writing, you didn't do many bits of writing, so is most of your teaching about grammar, at least your teaching in English? What did they teach you, do they teach you about literature and things like that?
- R. Ya, they taught us literatures and how to write and also read, ah, language. I think languages is what we did the most.
- Q. So what sort of things do you do in language?
- R. Mmm... You are given a sentence and they say you must change to direct, indirect speech. You sometimes you deal with conjunctions.
- Q. Okay, so you do exercises, language exercises?
- R. Ya, language exercises.

Appendix 8: Extracts from Interview with Kingsize

K - Kingsize

R - Researcher

- R. So the first experience you had of reading and writing, was when you went to primary school and a lot of that has to do with your sister and the teacher?
- K. Ja, and I can say writing English, again I went to Wartburg Indian school. When I first went there I didn't know how to even read English or write.
- R. What age was that again. What standard was that again?
- K. Second year.
- R. Okay, right they were doing everything in English?
- K. Ja, they were doing everything in English, but we were learning not difficult words, like mother, cow, window and I had a friend there, he was an Indian guy, he seemed to like me, then he helped me where I don't understand.
- R. So did you, after school, spend time with that friend of yours?
- K. Ja, I visited him at his home, at his home they were buying some vegies, so when I visited him we played bicycles, swim in a pool because they had a pool, but in a weekends. So when I shifted from Wartburg, he was crying and I cried too.
- R. Well that's sad. Ja, so those people welcomed you in their home and made you feel at home?
- K. Ja, when I was with them I had everything, they did not treat me ... [inaudible]
- R. So you have no contact with them any more?
- K. Ja, I've just come to Bishopstowe. I was, I knew something when I was there, I knew everything. I wasn't like in Wartburg I didn't know how to write.
- R. So, okay, class one your teacher seemed to be very kind to you there, she helps you, the teacher in the Indian school?
- K. The teacher at the Indian school, she was shouting at me because I did not know nothing. Ja, but she was shouting at me. I had a nice friend that was sitting near me, we were sitting together and when my teacher's shouting at me, he will explain now, don't do that to him because he is like this, like this, but when he's explaining that, he was small, we were small too. The teacher will shout at me and say don't talk, you can't talk to me like

that.

- R. So if you think of primary school now, think back over the whole of primary school time what sort of things did you read? Were you able to read? Did you get your own papers, magazines or anything like that?
- K. You see, in standard one, we learnt to write just a letter to your parents.
- R. Now, how did you learn? Did you actually write one or what?
- K. Our class teacher, because it would be difficult to write one, she wrote it on the board and we copied it and we had to re-read it. When it's test time or exam time we would write the same letter to see if we understand.
- R. Was it in English or Zulu?
- K. It was in English if I remember.
- R. And in Zulu, what sort of writing and reading did you do in Zulu in primary school?
- K. In Zulu we did write a letter in Zulu, but it wasn't difficult as English, you were in Zulu. He gave us topics, and showed us how we were gonna write it, then we did that. In exam we wrote a different letter from this one.
- R. So let's think back at the primary school, how many letters did you write in Zulu from standard, grade one, or when you started writing at Zulu from standard one? How many did you write in standard one, a year?
- K. Just one per year and one composition, and you only wrote an English about myself. Didn't go into details like, my name is mmmmm, I am mmmm in this school and all that, and at last, when you are concluding, you write what you wanna be when you are old.
- R. So, let's say you write approximately one composition and one letter a year in primary school, in English?
- K. Ja, in English we only wrote, we were comparing those two languages. Whatever we did in Zulu, we had to do in English, we wrote about 'myself' in English and also in Zulu too.
- R. So, now you have spoken about one topic about 'myself', what other topics did you write about, can you remember?
- K. We wrote about 'myself' and about 'my dog'.
- R. Did you have a dog?

- K. Ja, I had a dog. My friend gave me a dog, it was a small puppy. He gave to me I didn't know what was the meaning of the name but I just called it (inaudable).
- R. So what were other topics? 'My dog' and... ?
- K. It was 'My dog' and 'My school'.
- R. So, now when the teachers mark your stuff, what did they do? What did they mark, what did they say on your essays?
- K. Hooo, especially me, my hand writing was not good. When they were marking they all said I must write properly. I didn't finish words when I was writing I, just I, in Zulu you have to write 'I' and put a dot. I didn't do that - I just write 'I', and didn't put a dot. That's why they did that to me.
- R. So the teachers would say things about your grammar. You know, like this is the wrong tense, or....?
- K. Ya, but they seemed to like my English, especially my English, they liked me because I was trying my best.
- R. So can you remember what sort of things they said on your ...?
- K. In primary?
- R. Ya.
- K. Ya, I can remember my teacher in standard one wrote a letter to me. In the letter he wrote that my mother had to read with me. You see, I like playing in the classroom. I don't concentrate on the subject. But I was passing. I don't know why. Look, Mike, I'm stupid, I don't know what they wrote here, but I took the letter. She wrote that my mother must hit me, but she said I mustn't open this letter. I took the letter to my mother, she said I must stand here, and I stood. She read the letter, she just grabbed me, hit me. I didn't know what happened.
- R. All right, and so, reading - what sort of reading did you do? Did you read only books at school, did the teachers read to you, you know - what sort of reading did you have?
- K. When I was at school we had no books. Well we had some books, in primary - especially in primary - we had to be a group, maybe five people in one group. When we would read about the clever dog, I remember that topic. The clever dog was chasing the mice if they want to eat the [inaudible]. Ya, that's what you read about. Ya, and 'Animal Farm', 'Animal Farm'. Ya, that is a political book, but the characters are animals.
- R. Ya, I know that book. When did you study it?

- K. In standard three.
- R. In standard three! I studied it for matric. Ya, and you study it at University here.
- K. Ya, but our words were not difficult, but I've seen it now at high school, ugh, the words are now difficult. It was just written....
- R. So did the teachers read to you a lot, or were you asked to read in front of a class? Did you do any reading on your own at home, or anything like that?
- K. In school our teachers would stand in front of the class with her own book, and then they would tell us to read. After just reading a paragraph, explain, explain for us you see, these words, in Zulu, especially in English, I'm talking about in English, they would explain to us in Zulu - the words mean this and this. In Zulu we had to read ourselves. You see in Zulu it was difficult. If you couldn't read, the teacher would chase you outside, stand about fifteen minutes outside. They would shout at you, 'You can't even read your own language!'.
- R. Now what happened when you came to high school - you came to high school here? Now in terms of your thinking about your reading and writing, what sort of writing did you do here? Let's look first at how many essays and letters you wrote a year.
- K. Here in high school? Well in standard six I think we wrote three letters.
- R. And what types of letters were they?
- K. The first letter was a letter to your parents and the second letter was a business letter, and the third one - what was it about? No we wrote two. Oh, it was informal, we wrote informal letter and formal letter, and then we wrote the business letter.
- R. Now did you actually write the letter, or did you copy it from the board? What happened?
- K. In standard six we first copied them from the board, and then we went to preparing letters. Then our teacher would give us homework and a topic: who we were writing to about what, and we would do that.
- R. So you wrote on your own then?
- K. Ya, but hey, my results were really embarrassing.
- R. And in Zulu?
- K. Ya, in Zulu we wrote about two letters.
- R. So that's two letters in Zulu, two or three letters in English. And compositions, essays?

- K. Ya, we wrote composition essays in standard six, which was my school. That's where I learnt that if you write a composition you have to understand a topic, then choose some topics, and write the compositions. That's where I learnt that.
- R. So you were taught that in standard six - planning an essay?
- K. Ya, we were taught that in standard six.
- R. So you wrote the one topic 'my school' in English. What sort of topics did you write in Zulu? Can you remember?
- K. Ya, in Zulu we wrote about, how can you say? 'What do you want to be when you are old?' We had to say my name is this and...
- R. Now that sounds very similar to what you did in primary school?
- K. Ya, it sounds similar. In Zulu we wrote many compositions. Eight in standard eight. We wrote business letters in Zulu, you see.
- R. All right now, if you think back over your high school career, how many letters did you write a year in Zulu, and how many letters in English? Anything you wrote.
- K. In Zulu? We wrote two a year in Zulu, and three in English.
- R. And the compositions, essays?
- K. Last year we wrote about three compositions.
- R. Was that in Zulu?
- K. It was dialogue.
- R. All right so you wrote a dialogue. What sort of topic was the dialogue about?
- K. Oh, it was just like, I was chased from school, and my mother asked me, why were you chased from school? And I explained it.
- R. So every year you've done something like a business letter, an informal letter, and a formal letter. Okay, what's the difference between a formal and an informal letter?
- K. Ya, the difference between a formal and an informal letter is that the formal letter has two addresses, and the informal one has only one address.
- R. Now I was watching the other day in class, the teacher said this is how you put the addresses, but you didn't write the letter. Now how many times did you actually write

letters, or were you just told how to write them?

- K. Oh, you saw her telling us how to write the letter? After he told us that he said okay, homework he said we must choose our own topic, then we must write the letter about that.
- R. To the editor or whatever....
- K. Ya, he said we must write the letter to the editor, about your own topic.
- R. Okay, now if you look at it you've been about four years in high school, you've probably written about eight compositions in English, and about eight in Zulu. Is that right? And then you've written about eight or twelve letters in each language. And some of that writing would be a dialogue as well - so you wrote dialogues in Zulu and in English?
- K. Ya.
- R. Okay. Now, when teachers marked your stuff what did they say about you, what sort of things would they say on your essay?
- K. We've done a dialogue in a group. Not each person was writing. We were in a group of about four. Then, when it's your time to write, you take your own page and write your speech and then give it to another one in your group, you see Then he writes his speech.
- R. So each person writes something....
- K. Ya, then when we've finished writing that, we would stay together and read and correct each other. If there's a mistake somewhere then we correct it. That's how we did it.
- R. But now when you hand in an essay to a teacher, what happens to it?
- K. The teacher had comments mainly about one of us. Like I would ask a question and he misunderstood the question, then he would answer with the wrong answer. Then our teacher would say 'why did you answer it' because he asked this....
- R. So then what types of comments did they make on the essay? Did they say anything, like this is bad grammar, or 'your tense is wrong here', or 'I like what you're saying', 'I think this is an important idea', or what?
- K. Our speech was excellent, I can say that. Or just my speech was excellent. But they say hey, our tenses we miss....
- R. So would you have to do corrections then - rewrite a sentence or whatever?
- K. No, they would just point to the paragraph where you wrote wrong. They would say this

is supposed to be changed to this, and they would just correct for you.

R. The teacher corrected for you?

K. Ya.

R. Now in your other subjects, what sort of writing did you have to do? Did you ever have to write a long essay in history, or did you just write paragraphs, or was it short answers? What sort of writing did you have to do?

K. Hey, in Biology as you saw, we would first have to write notes, then the next day the teacher would explain the notes to us. We had to write an assignment, maybe we would have to write about, explain this in so many words. Or maybe we would just have to describe the parasite life cycle, you see. Then we would have to write it like that.

M. So that would be a short bit of writing that you would do?

K. Ya, it was quite short, but difficult.

Teachers' Interviews (Appendices (9 -11))

Appendix 9: Extracts from an Interview with Bongani (English Teacher)

B - Bongani

R - Researcher

- R. Now out of a class of 30 - that was my first experience - four wrote an essay. Two of them had changed the topic that they had started with, that they had obviously liked, and I don't know whether they felt they couldn't write on the topic that they wanted to but they changed it to something like 'my most exciting day of soccer' or 'the pen is mightier than the sword'. So I only got four of them, and I found an incredible lack of enthusiasm for writing, or interest in it. And what I found from students was that they loved doing grammar exercises - fill in the blanks and do this and do that. What explanation would you have for that?
- B. Ya, that is also what I experience Mike. It's basically because kids, right from primary school up to secondary, the skill for writing is not developed. The skill for thinking is not - it's like, Mike, if a child can't [inaudible] look at that picture; what thoughts does it provoke in your mind, you know? That's how they were taught, that's the teacher, says well fine, it's a man and a woman. They are never given a chance to develop that thinking; what are they doing there? Where are they going to? What might they be? You know, so now, in terms of writing, that lacks very much, so they had no enthusiasm for writing Mike. If you gave them something to write, they would do it, but they would hate you. But they would pretend they like you. That's why you got four writing out of thirty, and others come with excuses.
- R. So you would say that children have been taught almost not to take risks, not to, they just wanted to rote learn and do those easy fill in the blank exercises.....
- B. That's what the teacher gives you - homework to take home, and bring it back. As long as I have written something the teacher will be happy. You know that attitude - as long as it gets in my exercise book, I won't get in trouble.
- R. Now that's another question. This is something that has come up - a lot of punishment is associated with writing, which would seem to me to have a negative, would create a negative association with writing.
- B. The only time they talk about writing is 'Oh, if I don't write, then there's this...' , so the association is developed at the expense of teaching the writing technique, you know, to the child. And another point Mike could be, you know, mostly with black kids - you know this, you've taught at [school X] - once you get out of school, you're out of school, it's finished. When you come home, there's no space where you can sit like this and look at your book ...

- R. Ya, absolutely, this is what I found, the space for writing
- B. Even if you want to write, there's no space for writing....
- R. Ya, no that's true, I mean that's an issue, an issue that has come up again and again in what I've come across.
- B. And mostly in other homesteads, even if there is space, either they are selling liquor, or they're selling this, dagga, or that or that. So when you come home, school is finished, there are home chores now - there's somebody buying now, you know ...
- R. I remember one girl wrote in her dialogue journal. I wrote here and said 'why don't you do any home work?' You know she was one of those refugees from the violence so she travelled a long way to get to [school X], and she said; I catch a bus, I get home at four, five o'clock and because I'm the only girl, she said, I have to go and fetch the water, fetch the fire wood, make the supper, clean the dishes, and then there's no electricity and it's eight o'clock at night, and she's dead tired - she's been up since 5 o'clock in the morning. Ya, I mean you can understand all those sort of things.
- B. Ya, but then Mike, we shouldn't understand that that's the end of the story. There are kids who when they're out of school, when they get home, they have everything they need to have to prepare their schoolwork, you know. There's quite a number.
- R. You see, one of the things - comment on this - because I think it's actually confirming what you're saying. The one girl wrote to me in her dialogue journal and she said : 'why are you teaching us about paragraphs, nobody's going to ask us what is a paragraph in the exam?' and she was the one who was complaining. And I thought hell, I'm teaching them these skills of writing, and she was saying, hey, that's nonsense, just give us these grammar tests, that's what we want. So it seemed to confirm what you were saying - people are brought up to fear writing, people throughout their schooling just concentrating on, or seeing language learning as doing grammar exercises. And I came to the conclusion that many teachers and the pupils felt that so long as they could write a basic story that was fairly grammatically correct they would pass. That was their attitude to writing, which is very different to your experience.
- B. Ya, what is why most of the kids I taught, I tried to drag them away from that thinking. I taught it the other way around. 'Cause I remember one time I said to the kids 'please [inaudible]' so she [subject advisor] came to school and said 'right [inaudible]. By that time I had quite a heavy load - standard ten, A, B, C, D, E - five classes in standard ten and I was doing standard six and seven. Okay, so I taught about 300 and something kids - that's about half the school. So when she looked through the matrices' books, she said 'Ya, I don't do a lot of that'. 'But just check how many letters these kids have written, how many essays these kids have written, how many tests these kids have written, scheduled tests and impromptu tests, and see how many of them are marked'. She took her glasses off and she looked at me. And I said 'no, check'. You know, first she thought

I collected books from, you know, the good kids. I said 'no you can go to very class. I told them to bring all their English exercise books, so you can take from any class from any child'. Because my work they always did. So she said 'no, ya, this is right', and she wanted an explanation as to why. I told her the same thing. I said that my experience is that kids will do your work up to your satisfaction as long as you provided them with blank spaces. They would fill them in even two words per space. But if you gave them something to sit down and think about and write and be creative, you get [inaudible] And she said 'no, I think you're right', and she was quite happy. She wrote a very good report about that.

R. That gives me a lot of useful insight. How did you as a teacher feel about all the things you understood in here (we were looking at teacher guides on work programmes)? From what I've gathered you had to let me remember these things. Your work programme - sixteen ...

B. I know, I know, I know. This I don't even have to look at - I know it. So then you had to fill in this thing, this thing about what language things you did, then you had your weekly lesson planning, then you had your [inaudible]. So now you filled in that, you filled in that, you filled in that. And that's it, and you ignored the rest. I just did that only. I filled in once throughout the year. And then the following year there was the inspector.

R. Yes, yes I met him. I know him.

B. I quarrelled with the inspector. I told him; 'Peter, go to hell - I'm not going to fill in these things. If you want to write a report on that, chase me out of this school please do so. But what I want you to check and acknowledge, just check the quality of the work I teach these children. Check the results these children get. Because you know what Peter wanted? Peter wanted to check this, this, this, that, that, that. Take a child's book and then check the date here, check the date here. Check your work programme, check what the rules say. I told him you know; 'I'm sorry, but you can go to hell.' So there Mike, I hated doing this.

R. What were other teachers' reactions to this? And this was English, was there a similar thing in other subjects?

B. Yes.

R. So history was the same thing, geography

B. Yes, imagine Mike if you were teaching. Your work programme says six to ten. So, you were doing standard six and you were doing standard eight and ten.

R. And you've got this unit that took two weeks. Did anybody ever follow those units like they said they did?

- B. Not to the dot. I mean you could plan it - like this thing here. Attempting to plan for the whole year. Ya, a basic plan for the whole year - period one, period two, period three. I mean you could plan for the whole year, and teach for two weeks in six months.
- R. But it seems to me that what they're asking here is just too fast. In two weeks you've got to do this that and the next thing.
- B. Ya, the units consists of so many.
- R. There we go - comprehension, language study, writing. Now, in terms of writing, what struck me is that they always put writing right at the end. I mean when you look at their description of writing, most of the stuff, about writing is about grammar, look there that's all grammar. Then there's sentences, paragraphs, narratives, descriptions - this is standard seven - and letters. So it seems to give a message to teachers that your focus of your writing is about, must be grammar, and not about writing. I mean, how did you feel?
- B. Let me tell you Mike, it's a very good point. When (anonymous) became subject adviser, so she was teaching at Sukuma and I was teaching at [school X]. So, we used to attend workshops together. Suddenly she's the subject adviser. When she came to [school X] must have been when I was subject head - so there was quite a bit of quarrelling. And then they say now, ya, but you are the head of the subject, and you've got nothing to show what you are doing, I'm very disappointed. So she wrote a very bad report about me, and then I got the position. I said, 'I don't want the position.' [inaudible] carry on, because I know you know, what it's like [inaudible]. So then, there were three teachers who followed the syllabus to the dot. I said to them 'bullshit'. Can you see, you know, like this exercise book, in three months, the one language exercise book, would be gone, and then kids must buy another one. And the parents complain 'We don't have the money to buy these things'. The school would supply them at the beginning of the year, but when the term ends I mean the first quarter, when the first quarter ends she would ask them to bring another one, so the parents would complain. Ya, but none of the teachers would do that. And then I looked into the problem and I said to her 'why are you always getting into problems with the parents at the end of each quarter?' And then I discovered, oh it's the number of language exercise books that she does.
- R. And the writing?
- B. Ay, lots of writing, lots of writing.
- R. No, no I mean writing essays. Lots of writing of language, but not essays.
- B. Essays? Like bit, little bit, you knew. Like in three months Mike, you check a teacher's work, you know, and you find the kids have only written one letter.
- R. Well this is exactly, I was coming to this

- B. And one essay, maybe a narrative, and a description - one. And only one is marked halfway through the class the other one is still untouched. There was not even a signature to say 'no, I did see it'. And that kills me.
- R. Because that's what I found, you know, I mean talking to the kids, they spoke about their primary school, high school, and generally there was very little experience of extended writing. They said, one of the things they used to do was write down an essay, learn it, and it was asked in the exam. So they did two essays half year, four essays.
- B. And you know, one of the two would be asked in the exam.
- R. Ya, they learn one, and they do it in June, they learn another one and they do it in December.
- B. Ya, so you find a thick book like that, on the school, and it is just a waste. The whole book is a waste. They haven't done essays.
- R. I see. The other thing - when I looked at the school and looked at what writing they were experiencing in other subjects, and I followed a class around for more than a week, now they spent most of their time copying these summarised sentences from the board. I remember walking into a biology class. These kids would walk in, say hello, and then they sat down, wrote for 30 minutes and then 10 minutes before the end the teacher said 'stop', and she explained. Now this was the cross section of the earthworm. A couple of questions rose to my mind: Why wasn't there [inaudible]. But I mean they only had three textbooks in that class - so that's one reason
- B. The question I wanted to pose to you Mike, did you ever notice how many kids came [inaudible]?
- R. Ya.
- B. Others just carried exercise books, only, no textbooks, because the kids knew. You got biology, you write notes, you go to history, you write notes, you go to geography you write notes. But they know the English teacher wants the book, the book of the day, and the Afrikaans teacher wants the book, the book of the day, but the rest of the teachers don't mind you carrying the book. That's why at the end of the year when we must collect books, you find four books out the four hundred we gave out. The others were lost in February right at the beginning of the year because they did not have to carry them to class.
- R. In essence it seemed to me that what the teachers get from English syllabuses seems to say, if you look at it, overwhelmingly, some of your teachers have interpreted it as language exercise. And it seems to me that children right from primary school have almost been initiated into the belief that doing these language exercises is the way to learn language. And that's why writing suffers. And that puzzles me, because if you look

at a matric exam, writing an essay is quite a big chunk of the mark, writing a good essay.

- B. But we were looking at an institution similar to the one you have just related and we were looking at the allocation of marks in an essay. You look at the content, which should carry a thick chunk of the marks, and you look at the language, language carries a lot of things, spelling, this that and the next thing. But they seemed to allocate a lot more marks on language than on content, so if a child scores on content but is weak on language, then they automatically fail the child. But if a child is very good at language, but has nothing on content, they automatically pass the child. But then you're passing nothing.
- R. I mean Jabulani felt, in conversation, I still have to interview him, but he said look you're caught. These kids don't even understand the textbook, but then, because they've been copying from the board, when they're asked to write an exam they write in point form, which is tragic.
- B. Ya, I think Jabulani's right. You know with our kids, they look at the history paper and they 'Oh God', just before he or she opens the paper.
- R. Because there's very little reading material in their homes, a lot of their parents are illiterate, so they have no history of that behind them.
- B. Ya, and a lot of the teachers themselves won't encourage the kids to read, and more than that the teachers will write notes - to make it easy for them - just write notes, so it's just notes, and not the use of the book. Like I was saying earlier on. The teacher would write the summary of the notes and say chapter so and so page 26 paragraph 9. So the chap would write the summary of the notes, come to the paragraph and think 'oh', [inaudible]. Now when it comes to the examination the question comes, 'oh by the way - Stalin's policy'.
- R. And they start from the date and they just go through.
- B. Ya, and you expect them to write that much, and they just write this much, because this is what they got from the teacher's summary on the board. One point you just mentioned is that remedial work - we did not deal with that, but you mentioned it. There was emphasis on remedial work. But what interested me was how can [inaudible]. That I did remedial work with these kids when I have not given them anything to write - so what is remedial there?
- R. That's a good question.

Appendix 10: Extracts from an Interview with Dumisa (Science Teacher)

D - Dumisa

R - Researcher

- R. Okay, alright. So going back, let's look at particularly at the kind of school ... mm ... if you think back to your learning and doing of writing, did you, how did you find writing? Were you, did you feel positive about it? Did you feel it was difficult? Can you remember anything really good or really bad about your experience of writing at that stage?
- D. Ah I can't remember something bad about it, ahh I was just doing it, I can't say that there is this that I think it was good or that was bad, I was just doing it. You know I thought I had to do it in order to succeed in school, so I was just doing it.
- R. So now what type of writing did you do in the school, say both in Zulu and in English and what types of writing were you asked to do?
- D. We asked to do what we what was called compositions.
- R. Yah.
- D. Write stories you know, besides all these other things [inaudible], and all these things but writing we given some topics 'the journey by train', you know sometimes things that even if you have never even travelled on a train (laughter) they give you that topic.
- R. Okay, so I mean how much writing did you do? I've been, you know, I've been doing some other interviews and some of the pupils spoke about doing very little. How much writing did you do? Now you're a different generation to them, I might be ... You know if you're thinking about say in your primary school, how many compositions did you write in, in, if you remember a vague number in, ah, in Zulu and how many in English etc? I mean it might be very difficult for you to remember that far back, but if you do?
- D. Ah, I can't remember exactly but were doing some writing?
- R. Would you say you did about three or four compositions a year more less? You can't remember accurately?
- D. I can't remember accurately, but three, four, five somewhere there.
- R. A year?
- D. A year.
- R. Even in the ... when did you first write anything lengthy in English?

- D. Standard [inaudible] by length, about how much?
- R. No, I'm saying about a page of extended writing you know, as apposed to writing three of four lines of something. Sort of that you were given, okay, go away and write this.
- D. At secondary school level?
- R. At secondary level. And so what writing did you do in English in Primary school?
- D. Yah in primary school we used to write some short paragraphs.
- R. Okay, okay, and what type of topics ,can you remember? You spoke about journey by train.
- D. Yah, 'my first day at school', 'my school', 'my teacher'. We were given those sort of topics.
- R. Yah, and in your Primary school, in the other subjects, were you ever given say writing paragraphs?
- D. Yah.
- R. On what sort of things?
- D. It was Zulu.
- R. Oh in Zulu. Okay, then the other subjects like history and geography in Primary school?
- D. No.
- R. You would never write anything?
- D. We would never write anything in those subjects.
- R. It was just short answers and things?
- D. Short answers, filling in, and all those things, not something big.
- R. So okay, if we move onto high school, and I want you to try and remember how you, what did teachers say to you about writing [inaudible]? What did they, if you can remember anything in particular, maybe there is some way that they taught you that seemed to be fairly similar or maybe someone taught you something different? How did the teaching of writing happen?
- D. Ah, I think it was quite similar in that you were just given a topic. Right here's your

topic, got to write 'my first day at school'. And you will say there is something that is called an introduction. In the introduction you must do this and this and this ... go through the body goes to the conclusion, that was sort of something similar.

- R. How did they go through it, I mean when they saying how we introduce it? This is the sort of thing I am interested in ... ah ... you know. This is an introduction, what do they say in an introduction, how did you have to write in an introduction?
- D. Yah, but they explained, you know, saying an introduction you've got to consider how the reader is going to read this, you know, explain what an introduction is and these things. But I'm afraid there was not much feedback after writing those things, you know, we used write these submit them, get the mark when we were given back, you know, just like that.
- R. You were only given the mark, what other comments were there?
- D. Very few, if there were any.
- R. Very few. So after that you just got the essay back and that was end?
- D. Just got the essay back and that was the end of it.
- R. Okay, did you do did you do history or geography? What subjects did you end up in Matric doin? I'm just trying to work out the sort of writing demands that would have been placed on you.
- D. In Matric I was doing Biology, Physics and Mathematics.
- R. Ah, so you didn't do any of those other ones. Yah. so okay, say in Biology or Science, what sort of writing did you have to do?
- D. Ah, a lot of it was in Biology. We used to be given essays.
- R. What sort of essays?
- D. Ah things like kidney functioning, how did the kidneys function.
- R. Ah, so you would actually describe the function, it was more like an explanation of something. Okay, so ... ah ... did that happen in the senior high school or the junior high school?
- D. Senior high school.
- R. Okay, so in your content subjects in the junior high it was more, shall we say, in the subjects it was more, it was a lot of ...?

- D. In the content subjects there was not much writing.
- R. It was still shortish answers?
- D. Yah.
- R. Okay, alright. Now I don't know, there's something I want to ask you a little bit later in terms of your teaching at [school X], but one of the things I've noticed a great deal in the school is a lot of copying, students spending a lot of the time copying notes from the board. Did that happen to you a great deal?
- D. Yah. that happened.
- R. What to you were the reasons for that when you were at school?
- D. Ahh, I don't know, I don't know what the reasons but it was a lot of ... in all my schooling years that was what was happening.
- R. Now what I've noticed a lot in some of the schools ... did you have a shortage of textbooks when you were at school?
- D. Yah a lot of it.
- R. Okay, so in other words, the teachers might have been doing it in order to, that you actually create some sort of textbook?
- D. Yah.
- R. So your, your ... you had a big memory of doing lots of notes, of copying of notes that the teacher had written on the board?
- D. Yah.
- R. Okay, okay, alright. Mmm ... so if we now look at your teacher training, you went to Indumiso. Now I'm wanting you to, to sort of think back and ... what was done there about writing, teaching you as a future teacher of writing, what did, can you remember?
- D. Organization [inaudible] ... on the content of your, of your thing.
- R. Okay, and then what did you when you got an assignment back? What happened with that, did you do anything with it, did you ... was it just something that you took in? Did you rewrite it or ...?
- D. You just have to take it, read the comments, you know, all those things.

- R. Okay, and now you went to that correspondence teachers' training college. I just want to talk about that for a bit. Mmm, now there obviously was a lot of writing [inaudible], all the time. Was that essay types or short answers or what type?
- D. Essay types, short answers for [inaudible]
- R. Okay, now what did you feel about that whole process of writing there? Did you feel it was any better, or any different or, mmm, because it was correspondence, did a lot of things the way you related to your lecturers change a great deal?
- D. No, it was just the same thing you know, writing, getting some information from things, write down, submit it, comes back, reading the comments and all these things.
- R. Okay, so there was no teaching about how to go about it, mmm, in any way?
- D. Mmm, there were what was called regional meetings, one in a semester. So you had to attend those regional meeting where problems that you have and, ahh, the lecturer concerned would give sort of guide lines.
- R. What did you feel about teaching in [school X] what is your impression there?
- D. Ahh, I don't know where to start (laughter). You know when I went there I felt I had a duty to do and, ahh, I must say I was a little bit disappointed
- R. What were you disappointed at?
- D. Ahh, the way, I think kids didn't see the importance of, you know, coming to school and all those things.
- R. Yah, I noticed that quite a lot. After lunch there was a huge drop in your numbers.
- D. Which worried me a lot.
- R. What do you put that down to? Why is there at this stage in people, like [inaudible] have you got any sort of explanation for that?
- D. Ahh, I may be wrong but I think it goes back to the community, the people themselves, the parents. It seems they just don't care, you know. Wakes up in the morning, goes to work where he is working and he doesn't care whether the child goes to school. What was being, what was happening at school, you know all those things. You call a student, I mean a parents meeting you don't even get a quarter of the parents that are supposed to come.
- R. Yah, now what did you find in teaching Standard six students, standard six and seven in Science? Now you would be in a sense teaching them how to write in science, now what

did the syllabus require you to do in that, in terms of their writing? What requirements were there in there syllabuses?

- D. Well the syllabus would just give topics that had to be dealt with and in the end stated that there should be a lot of writing to give it to the pupils. And you find that you get a problem there because their writing skills, you know, how to ... physical writing, they had a problem with that.
- R. So actually the whole question of [inaudible] is still an issue?
- D. Yah, that also a problem. And another thing which becomes a problem is that the medium of instruction it was English, they had to be taught in English, whereas the only situation where they find themselves having to communicate or do anything in English is in the classroom. Once the school is out, you'll never speak English again until the next day.
- R. So in terms of, of the type of, what type of exercises did you give the students in writing, how did you do that, given those problems you talked about?
- D. Yah, given those problems you know there were ... I used to do some worksheets, mmm, sort of give them exercises from the worksheet. They wouldn't write some paragraphs or essay, we just fill in those words missing words, signs true, false and all these things. There was not much writing as such, to write paragraphs and all those things.
- R. Yah, ahh, I have another question I 'm just trying to remember what it was ... it was something ... ahh ... while you were talking I thought of something else so it interrupted the, the question I had before ... amm ... yah, so it was worksheets. Oh yes, it was ... now what was the situation of the students you taught around textbooks?
- D. Yah when I came, I don't know, fortunately textbooks were there, they were there and, ahh, I made them to buy those the worksheet ... so we used to raise some funds and buy these worksheets, and each have a copy.
- R. Did you feel that you that your kids had to do a lot of copying off the board? Did you feel you had to do that?
- D. With the presence of these set worksheets I didn't see any need of making them copy a lot, but occasionally I used to give them something.
- R. So what was it about the setwork, work, workbooks that allowed you not to have to give notes like other teachers felt they had to?
- D. It's, amm, these worksheets have got, you know, facts of the subject matter you know, it's a worksheet that can act as a textbook sometimes.

- R. Okay, alright. Now if you look at the textbook that you had there, do you think the children could have handled that textbook on their own?
- D. Ahh no.
- R. So you think the language is too ...?
- D. The language would be very difficult.
- R. This is one of the reasons some of the teachers like DJ gave me, that he said, you know, the students couldn't handle the textbooks so you were actually summarizing and simplifying it. It was the other reason besides the fact of the shortage, you were summarising and simplifying and he felt he was forced to do that under those sort of circumstances. Would you agree with that?
- D. Yes I agree with that, yes, you find yourself forced to do that because on their own students cannot handle those textbooks, the language inside there becomes a problem.
- R. Yah.
- D. So you had to simplify it, you know, put it on the board so they can just copy it.
- R. Okay, mmm, how do you feel about writing now, you've obviously now gone, come to University, you've been doing a lot of writing, I mean teachers' training college, university. Let's just finish off there. What do you feel about writing in the University? Are you finding it a change, a difference from your previous writing experiences?
- D. Yah there is a change. It's different from my previous writing, you know, maybe it's now because I'm now aware what is expected of me, what type of writing that I must do, then I see the change. Academic writing, and you know that writing that we used to do, maybe, I think it's the awareness that has you know ...
- R. Okay, now you did 3L [a first year academic development course] didn't you?
- D. Yes.
- R. Now what did you feel about what you learnt through writing there?
- D. I mean 3L, it's one of the courses, it is the course that really helped me, otherwise I think if I just come here and not do 3L I would be having a problem that I wouldn't know that I'm having.
- R. Okay, so what about the 3L course was, was useful to you? I mean was there anything particular about that whole process that you went through?

- D. I think it was, ahh, the thing that I can pick up, you know, I used to do writing but my writing was very, what can I say ... casual. It was not writing academic writing so 3L helped me there.
- R. Now in 3L you, your essay was marked and then handed back, and you had to rewrite. What did you feel about that?
- D. I think it was a good thing because otherwise if I had to write it and submit it, it comes back with no ... looking at it again I wouldn't know where the problem lies.
- R. So if, if you think back to your school experience now, and the University, and what's happened now what do you feel? I mean you, am I correct in saying that your experience there didn't help you much in terms of writing for this particular context?
- D. Yah, yah.
- R. Okay, mmm, what do you think needs to, what do you feel needs to change in the teaching and learning of writing in schools in order to, to prepare people better for the demands that are placed on them outside?
- D. Ahh, I should think for, in the teacher training there should be courses like 3L or a little bit of Applied Language Studies.
- R. In Applied Language Studies you focussed on genre analysis.
- D. Genre analysis, yah.
- R. So that might be important, and that needs to be transferred into the schools, that sort of thing?
- D. Into the schools, yah, I think it is very important. Teachers should be aware of these things because, you know, I think if you could take all the teachers that are practising now that are at schools now, teaching now, if you can take those teachers, teach them things like 3L, they will go back being different teachers.
- R. Yah, so in other words you are saying something like it would be important to, to get teachers to develop their own writing, in a way, because then they will go back and would influence, in some ways, the writing they do in the schools?
- D. And have, you know, just the awareness of the importance of writing. You know those things are not done to, in the teachers' training colleges.

Appendix 11: Extracts form Interview with Mandla (History Teacher)

M - Mandla

R - Researcher

Teachers' Training College

- M. I struggled the first year at Indumiso, but then from the second year onwards I had done well enough during the first year to get these bursaries to see me through the two years there. Ya, but then again, ya, it was going to be a different sort of experience from Marionhill. We were going down in a way, because there was a lot being done at Marionhill. Suddenly I came to Indumiso where the college was taking care of the second language speakers, and the assumption was that all folks weren't really used to writing, so we were going back to the basics. It was quite boring. I think I was somehow a bit lazy if you come to think of what we were doing at Marionhill. Because suddenly the work that we were doing was too simple, too boring, not challenging that much, but then ya, but then again.
- R Ya, this is the important thing, because I spoke to Dumisa about his experience, and he said, well, he found the teacher training college writing very similar to school. He did his assignments, he got very few comments, and that sort of thing. Was that your experience?
- M Yes, it was something like that. There were a few good teachers again, there were good lecturers at Indumiso - one was Michelle Taska. She was [inaudible] at the time in History. She immediately spotted out, I mean some of us could write, because I remember it was a first that way, and she mentioned in class, if you want to see how an essay is written - whether it is a narrative or a discursive essay - get hold of Jabulani's get hold of Denis's, and uh, and I said goodness me, I was just writing because you know, I was used to writing and everything. I didn't know it was going to be an example because other people were struggling. And one can understand, can appreciate their dilemma, because they cater for people who are coming from school, and they are trying to bridge that, and to a certain extent they were being [inaudible]. Now for some of us who were coming from a good school like Marionhill, we were finding the work too, too simple. And boring at times. I mean to a point where you'd - I remember in a lot of my books, ya, I lost a lot of them in Mpumalanga. I used to draw a lot of pictures on my books, and that tells you I wasn't concentrating on what they were saying, I was not listening, and drawing pictures instead because.
- R So what types of writing did they ask you to do then?
- M Yes, they would go back to the basics, telling us to write in narrative, how to write in narrative, then we would go for that. Surely they were not giving us examples, I mean model answers. They would go for those very simple ones, and they would try and introduce us to discursive essays as well, where you're argumentative, or where you start coming up with an argument. And this was going on gradually over a long period of time.

And of course a lot of time was spent, I mean, on how we should be teaching these sort of methods as well. I mean that has always been my criticism of the college.

R Okay, so you're saying that the types of writing didn't extend you, you thought you were going back to basics. The comments on your writing, you know....

M Ya, to be quite fair with them, um, Michelle used to comment a lot. Ya, they were making fair comments, a great deal of them. And obviously as I say for Michelle Taska, she used to do a lot of that. There was an old lady as well, was quite a good teacher, an English teacher. Um, there was another old lady, she was very good as well, she left very early because she was almost at a retiring age when I came to the college. They used to comment a great deal, but again they would always bear in mind that they were dealing with these students that were coming from your formerly disadvantaged schools, and to a certain extent they would be satisfied with what you're doing and then try and concentrate on what other people were doing. There were these times that I would get bored because we would get involved in an exercise, I would give all the answers, and at the end of the day, I would sit there because other people were trying to struggle, and get along with that. Ya, and I mean, I felt ya, by the time I came to University, I had just gone through a lot of being lazy again. I mean you get pushed all the way at Marionhill, and then you work for two years and go down like that, and then suddenly you come to University again where you are demanded to do something, ya.

R So there wasn't much link between what you were asked to do at Teacher's Training College and what you were asked to do at University?

School Experiences

R All right, I would like to get on to your experiences at school now, and I want to sort of pose questions to you from my experience, okay? Okay, let's start with one question that arose out of my experience. I found kids not interested in writing, you know, I remember going through, I helped them brainstorm ideas, showed them how to plan, and I said okay, now we've gone through a whole lot of periods on this, now go off and write your essay. They chose their own topics, they did all that, and I remember I had a class of about 35- only four people came back with something written.

What is your reaction to that? Why would kids ... and you know, the other thing that came up, they seemed to love grammar, these little grammar exercises. They got quite excited about that, as if this was how they were learning writing. Now, how would you explain that?

M It is the emphasis on examination. Ya, I mean a lot of teaching in high schools ... I'm not sure what has been happening now, I mean I've not been a school teacher since '95 - but my experience from 1993 to 1995 was that a number of people would focus on exams - what are we going to be required to write during the exams, and um, whether they learnt anything didn't matter. What was important as far as a number of pupils were concerned,

and as far as a number of teachers, not only teachers, also the subject advisers in the DET, was exams. So, all education was geared to was exams. If you can learn something, you should come back and reproduce it without really thinking, that is all that mattered.

R Okay, so you're saying there's quite a legacy behind that. That the sort of messages kids have got throughout their schooling, is learn and memorise for the exam?

13. Learn and memorise and reproduce. For as long as you can, you know, just like a parrot, come back to the answers. You know of course it was reinforced by the subject advisers. I remember when I came to [school X] in '93, the school principal at the time said to me he would like to give me the standard ten for History. And I think I had the standard nines for English because I had been there for English for quite a number of years. So I did standard nine and ten, and the subject adviser came to school. I was trying to teach them to write paragraphs, essays and everything, and he said to me have you ever taught history before? I looked at this chap, I mean I was having an honours degree anyway from UNISA, so I had taught history at Elandskop before that, and English of course. My English advisers were wonderful in '87 for a school like that, where I taught first. And I looked at him, and I said, 'Yes, I've taught history before', and he said, 'Do you know what you require in the exam?'. I said, 'Unfortunately each time I applied to go to the marking centre I was turned down,' He said, 'Well then, I'm not sure, I'm not happy with you teaching history to standard ten.' I said, 'Well I didn't know that the subject adviser decides because we've never been to the centre.' And I said to him 'Well unfortunately I'm a ten teacher already, what exactly do you have in mind?' He said, 'No, we expect people to reproduce, because our marking is point, point, point. They don't look at how sentences have been constructed, whether there is any argument that makes any sense, they look for points'.

And um ya, I mean of course I had a few very good students who were saying to me for the first time they were all of a sudden coming across paragraphs and writing essays in standard ten. They had never been exposed to this kind of thing before that. They did quite well, fair enough, I mean in standard ten at the end of the year, although I mean ya, the class was struggling, the bulk of the class was struggling, and few of the students did work. And, then the following year I had to give in to the teacher that was favoured by the subject adviser. My criticism immediately, she could not teach them to write, she was making them copy from the board. She had been to the examination centre so much that she would take the model answers that they were given at the examination centre and use them to teach the pupils - the pupils were sent a copy. And all the students suddenly switched from a higher grade teaching, I mean exams, to standard grade, because all they were supposed to do was to reproduce and not write essays, not write arguments. With English it was a different story because [inaudible] was doing that. I wasn't exposed to standard ten teaching, but what I started doing with, was to start teaching free writing, paragraphs and things like that. And then again, like your experience, the students wouldn't trust it. They thought ... ya, I remember at one stage they called me a slave driver of some kind. I wanted them to do a lot of writing. Why should they do the writing

all the time - it doesn't matter? As far as they were concerned they should learn what they are going to be expected to write in the exam.

R Ya, um, what was the other question I wanted to ask you about school. Okay, that last point, about the amount of work done. I think what I noticed in my interviews with kids is that they hardly do any essays, and I've looked at exercise books, and I've seen that there are absolutely no essays. The one's copied from the board obviously, and that's the essay. How do you ...?

M You know this was still the experience at [school X] as well. I mean we were making that point earlier on. Ya, it was quite common in [school X]. I remember I spoke to Bongani who happened to be a senior English teacher, and I was in standard nine, and there was in standard eight - a very good teacher, but very busy with the unions. Ya, people weren't giving pupils enough written exercises because marking essays was a lot of work, and then teachers would then give them very few because they demanded, I mean, they're expected to teach them somehow, they should be having them somehow so they did some essays - some writing. But otherwise these teachers were to choose in high schools, because of the big classes, they would choose not to

R Ya, there would be a lot of short exercises, fill in the answers - that kind of thing.

M Ya, ya exactly. Because then they can mark them very quickly, get them back to the pupils, and then give them the next exercise. So with the authorities they would be in the good books, but then the pupils are going to lose out in the process. Because if you take in the essays and do thorough marking, say you teach three classes. I remember in standard nine I used to have three classes or four classes and you took one of them from me. But, if you teach say, yours was the smaller one as well, comparatively speaking ...

R The one class I had was a small one.

M Ya, it was an accounting class and there were very few. Otherwise if you go to the ones that were doing history and the ones that were doing science, classes would be quite big, quite big.

R My class was about 35, your guys were around 50.

M Ya, 50, 58. I think I had 61 it was, 58 in another one, then the other one was 65. Quite big classes. Ya, so if you were to mark that and be very thorough, usually teachers would refuse to do that. I remember we used to have meetings. Meeting after meeting, and of course the worst was that you had to be [inaudible]. They would start putting pressure on me, saying 'goodness me, you must start teaching our pupils to write'. I remember with exception, where this one young pupil, in standard eight, who wrote for a competition with Nicro, and got number two from our school. I think the winning essay was from one of the schools in [inaudible]. She was writing about drugs, and how drugs had messed up the townships. It was a beautiful essay. I remember I offered to type it.

She wrote it by hand and she was also a brilliant student, coming from a very poor family. I think her mom was a domestic worker, and not so much [inaudible], but a very keen reader, and having friends of the family where the mom was working. I mean these young kids as well, and she was writing quite well. Then you would have pressure like that. Those pupils who are doing bad, and a few of those that are doing like that, but then the rest would then be neglected as I was saying earlier on. You would then find that in practice, in schools, with teachers attending to those who are showing signs of progress and then leaving the rest. And then of course responding to the pressures, like she spotted this thing at Nicro and wanted to enter the competition. I encouraged them to start drafting, and I think about four of them entered the competition and she was one of the top three.

Appendix 12: 1993 Matriculation Essay Paper Marking Memorandum

NOVEMBER 1993

ENGLISH 2ND LANGUAGE H.G. MARKING MEMORANDUM

PAPER 1: FULL -TIME AND PART-TIME

I. INTRODUCTION

The following guidelines refer to the marking of both the composition and letter or other short piece of writing. A holistic approach to the evaluation of writing will be used i.e. examiners will base their judgement on their impression of the whole composition/letter. The composition or letter will be judged on its communicative effectiveness.

To help examiners in their evaluation a marking profile containing 4 component scales has been provided to help focus the reader's attention on important aspects of composition writing.

II. MARKING PROCEDURE

1. Each composition will be marked by two different markers under the same Senior Sub-Examiner, or two Senior Sub-examiners under the same Chief Examiner/Deputy Chief Examiner. This procedure will be followed until the Chief Examiner is satisfied that markers are using similar standards.
2. The first marker will mark only the composition. The second marker will mark both composition and letter/

short piece. Two quick readings of each piece of writing are expected from each marker at this stage.

- (a) The first reading will be for an overall impression concentrating on the message. The examiner should ask himself/herself questions about the writer's ideas and how well they are developed and sequenced to convey a complete picture. Marks should then be allocated under Content and Organisation finding the descriptors that best describe the writer's success. A score should be determined for each component to reflect these descriptors and be recorded on the top left corner of the script as follows:

C = _____ O = _____

- (b) The second reading will be to decide on scores for the remaining two categories:

Vocabulary and Language Use. The examiner must decide if the vocabulary and manipulation of language work effectively to convey the intended message without distortion or loss of meaning.

The marks for the two categories should also be reflected alongside the marks for content and organisation.

- (c) Marks for the 4 categories should then be added up and the total mark transferred to the outside cover of the scripts.

3. Scripts that have been marked by two markers will be passed on to the Senior Sub-examiner. Where the composition marks differ by more than 10. The Senior Sub-examiner will remark both composition and letter. The two marks closest to each other will then be averaged.

GENERAL

1. Examiners should not be afraid to award high marks for a well-written answer or to fail a weak candidate.
2. Where a piece of writing is completely irrelevant, a 0 should be given for content.
Where only a section of it is irrelevant, the mark for content should be adjusted accordingly. e.g. If half the piece of writing is irrelevant, a mark should be given out of half the total mark for content.
3. In the case of a LETTER, one mark should be deducted for each of the following if omitted:

- (i) Address/es of sender/recipient
- (ii) The date
- (iii) A suitable conclusion
- (iv) In the case of a business letter, if the candidate uses a heading, it must come after the Dear Sir not before.

NB It is not necessary to use a heading - it is optional.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Composition	70-56	55-49	48-42	41-35	34-28	27-21	20-14	13-0
Letters	30-24	23-21	20-18	17-15	14-12	11-9	8-6	5-0
CONTENT	20-16 <u>8-7</u>	15-14 <u>7-6</u>	13-12 <u>5</u>	11-10 <u>4</u>	9-8 <u>4-3</u>	7-6 <u>3-2</u>	5-4 <u>2</u>	3-0 <u>1-0</u>
Depth; substance; knowledge	impressive	meaty <i>substantive</i>	some substance	adequate	insubstantial	thin	shallow	empty
Interest; originality; insight	riveting	stimulating	interesting	a glimmer	predictable	trite inane	dull	void
ORGANISATION	16-13 <u>7-6</u>	12-11 <u>5</u>	10 <u>5-4</u>	9-8 <u>4-3</u>	7-6 <u>3</u>	5 <u>3-2</u>	4-3 <u>2-1</u>	2-0 <u>1-0</u>
Coherence; fluency	impressive obvious	clear & fluent	quite coherent	some lapses	some confusion	confusing	pretty meaningless	→
Cohesion	obvious	present	some markers	few markers	no markers	no markers	no markers	wrong markers
Structure; organisation	intelligent	well organised	main ideas stand out	signs of sequencing	loosely organised	disorganised	incoherent	too little to organise
Paragraphing -Introduction & conclusion -topics -unity	skillful striking	good	sensible	some control	unhelpful	faulty; illogical	→	→
VOCABULARY	16-13 <u>7-6</u>	12-11 <u>5</u>	10 <u>5-4</u>	9-8 <u>4-3</u>	7-6 <u>3</u>	5 <u>2</u>	4-3 <u>2-1</u>	2-0 <u>1-0</u>
Range; depth; aptness; sophistication	exceptional	very good	good	average	weak	poor	dismal	nothing there
Register	spot on	appropriate	acceptable	some lapses	inappropriate	unacceptable	no idea at all	→
Word form	faultless	minor lapse/s	few errors	some errors	poor control	even worse	mangled	→
LANGUAGE USE	18-15 <u>8-7</u>	14-13 <u>6</u>	12-11 <u>5</u>	10-9 <u>5</u>	8 <u>4-3</u>	7-6 <u>3</u>	5-4 <u>2</u>	3-0 <u>2-0</u>
Sentence structure	variety used effectively	variety used well	some complex, used well	simple, used well; no complex/ faulty complex	several errors	major errors	no idea <i>must intro- -event</i>	→
Errors	virtually error free	few serious errors	some errors but meaning clear	several errors but meaning O.K.	frequent errors; meaning affected	dominated by errors; meaning obscured	errors render it meaningless	→

1. Each piece of writing is given four marks - one each for content, organisation, vocabulary and language use, with maximums of 20, 16 16 and 18 respectively for the composition and 8, 7, 7 and 8 for the letter or other task.
2. It is not possible to pay full attention to both content and expression at the same time. Each piece of writing must therefore be read twice holistically and quite rapidly both times.
3. After the first reading give marks for content and organisation and after the second reading for vocabulary and language use. Write these marks top right on the first page of each section and transfer the total to the front cover.
4. Marker responses to key features of writing under all four headings should be shown in red using symbols in common use such as a tick for approval, a question mark for puzzlement and & for an error of language and so on.

REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS EN KULTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

ADMINISTRASIE: VOLKSRAAD
ADMINISTRATION: HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

NASIONALE EKSAMENS
NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

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N0015(i)/93

NOVEMBER 1993

NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE
ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE HG
FIRST PAPER

TIME: 1½ HOURS

MARKS: 100

- NB - This question paper consists of TWO sections.
- Begin each section on a new page.
 - Read all instructions carefully at the beginning of each section.
 - Use the pages marked **ROUGH WORK** in your answer booklet to plan your essay and letter or short piece of writing. It is important to do this and write down the ideas you want to use in your essay before you start writing the final draft.

SECTION A/...

SECTION A: COMPOSITION

- Write one of the following compositions, 300 to 400 words in length (approximately 1½ to 2 pages). You are advised to spend about 60 minutes on this section.
 - Write down only the number of your answer in the middle of the page. e.g. **QUESTION 1**. A title is **NOT** required.
 - Please write **NEATLY AND LEGIBLY** and only **BETWEEN** the margins.
 - Candidates will be **PENALISED** for the indiscriminate use of capital letters.
1. Many of your friends and classmates come from troubled homes because of parents or relatives who are addicted to alcohol or to other kinds of drugs. Write an essay on what you see as the dangers of drug addiction.
 2. Racial prejudice exists all over the world in varying degrees. Write an essay detailing reasons for its persistence and suggest ways in which it can be lessened.
 3. Imagine that you had a previous life in some other country during an earlier period in history. Describe clearly who you were and what life was like.
 4. Write a narrative essay on "The day when everything went wrong."
 5. Write an essay sketching the character of the one person who, in your opinion, has had the greatest influence on you. Give the person's name and describe him/her at home and at work. Elaborate as much as possible when describing his/her major personality traits. Explain how he/she has influenced your character. (Do not choose one of your parents.)
 6. The enclosed picture shows one of the many things students do to earn some pocket money. Use it to write an essay on the topic. You may choose to tell a story or to describe the various things that students do to earn money. (See page 3.)

QUESTION 6



SECTION B

LETTER OR SHORT PIECE OF WRITING

Answer **ONE** of the following questions in approximately **150 words** (i.e. about three quarters of a page). Begin your answer on a new page. Spend about 30 minutes on this section of the paper.

7. INFORMAL LETTER

Listening to the obituaries on the radio yesterday you heard the following announcement:

"Vuyo C. Hlophe, a teacher at Sun High School (your school) died yesterday at age 40, at his home, after a long illness. He is survived by his wife, Thato, and two sons. He will be buried at Avalon Cemetery on Saturday 20th November."

Write a letter of sympathy to Mr Hlophe's wife, expressing your shock at the death of so young a teacher, who was also one of the most popular Std 9 and Std 10 teachers at your school.

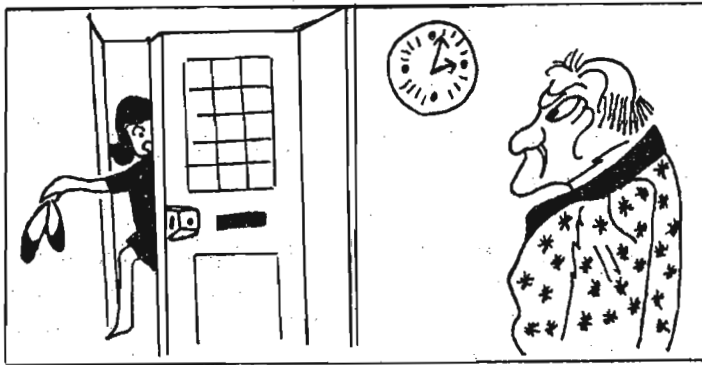
8. FORMAL LETTER

Elections for the SRC are soon to be held at your school.

Write a letter to the editor of your school magazine detailing very clearly what qualities you think an SRC president should have to be an asset to the school.

9. SHORT PIECE OF WRITING

Write a description of what you see in the following picture. Use as many descriptive words as possible to make the picture come alive. Do not tell a story.



TOTAL FOR SECTION B: [30]
TOTAL FOR PAPER: 100

**DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION**

**DEPARTEMENT VAN
ONDERWYS**

TIME: 1½ HOURS

N0015(i)/94
NOVEMBER 1994
NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE
ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE HG
(FIRST PAPER)

MARKS: 100

NB

- This question paper consists of TWO sections.
- Begin each section on a new page.
- Read all instructions carefully at the beginning of each section.
- Please write NEATLY and LEGIBLY and only BETWEEN the margins.
- You will be PENALISED for the indiscriminate use of capital letters.
- Use the pages marked ROUGH WORK in your answer booklet to plan your essay and letter/paragraph. It is important to do this and write down the ideas you want to use in your essay and organise them **BEFORE** you start writing your final draft.

SECTION A: COMPOSITION

Write one of the following compositions, 300 to 400 words in length (approximately 1½ to 2½ pages). You are advised to spend approximately 60 minutes on this section.

Write down only the number of your answer in the space provided
e.g. QUESTION 1. A title is not necessary.

1. "You have only one and a half hours for this paper. Remember to read the instructions carefully. You may start writing."
Describe your feelings and thoughts in the examination room as the clock struck nine.

2. Describe an incident from your childhood that means a lot to you - one that you will probably tell your own children about. Include details so that your reader will be able to picture the incident just as you experienced it.
Begin with:
"Once, when I was little, ..."
3. Write an essay on the division of labour by sex in the African community. You will, amongst other things, need to compare and contrast the roles and responsibilities of the different sexes.
4. The minibus taxi service seems to be today's answer to Africa's growing transport problems. There are, however, numerous difficulties associated with it. Discuss these problems and suggest possible solutions to improve conditions for its users.
5. "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder."
Write an essay inspired by this proverb.
6. You have entered a story-writing competition and you have been given picture A to create your story around. Write your story.

[70]



PICTURE A

Appendix 15: 1992 Zulu First Language (HG) Matriculation Examination (Paper 1)

JOINT MATRICULATION BOARD
GEMEENSKAPLIKE MATRIKULASIERAAD

N0007(1)/92
(2 pp.)

MATRICULATION EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1992
MATRIKULASIE-EKSAMEN, NOVEMBER/DESEMBER 1992

ISIZULU ULIMI LOKUQALA, IZINGA ELIPHEZULU : IPHEPHA LOKUQALA
ZULU FIRST LANGUAGE (HIGHER GRADE) : FIRST PAPER
ZOELOE EERSTE TAAL (HOËRGRAAD) : EERSTE VRAESTEL

(Amamaki/Marks/Punte : 100)

(Isikhathi/Time/Tyd : 2½ Amahora/Hours/Uur)

QAPHELA: Abahlolwayo bayaxwayiswa ukuthi bayokwemukwa amamaki uma benza umsebenzi ngobuvamba, noma kambe amaphutha ekwahlukaniseni amagama, noma ekusebenziseni izimpawu zokhefu ngokulindelekileyo, noma ekwahlukaniseni izigaba zendaba ngokufanelekileyo, noma ekupeleni amagama ngendlela emisiweyo.

ISIQEPHU A

Khetha isihloko ESISODWA kwezilandelayo ubhale ugcwalise amakhasi amabili:

1. (a) Imisiko Yoswenka.
(b) Umhlonishwa Oweqiwa Wukudla.
(c) Umphakathi Onengqondo Efile.
(d) Lixhoshwa Kanye Lesabe.
(e) Imibono Ngokwelamanisa Eduzane.
(f) Ukuqubuka Kwemijondolo Emalokishini.

(40)

SECONDARY SCHOOL
FINAL EXAMINATION 1999
ENGLISH PAPER 1

MARKS: 90

GRADE: 11

TIME: 1 ½ Hrs

INSTRUCTIONS

1. There are THREE Sections in the Paper.

SECTION A - ESSAY WRITING

SECTION B - INFORMAL WRITING

SECTION C - FORMAL WRITING

2. You are expected to ANSWER:

ONE ESSAY - SECTION A (50 Marks)

ONE INFORMAL WRITING - SECTION B (20 Marks)

ONE FORMAL WRITING - SECTION C (20 Marks)

[90]

SECTION A - ESSAYS

Choose one Essay from the ones given below. Your Essay should not be more than 300 words. Write down the number and Title of the Essay you choose.

1. You consider yourself fortunate to be living in South Africa, when you think of everything that the country has to offer its people. Write a Composition with the following Title:
‘THESE THINGS MAKE ME PROUD TO BE A SOUTH AFRICAN’ [50]
2. Write a story containing the words below. Also provide your story with a suitable Title.
‘WHEN I SAW THEM LEANING AGAINST THE WALL WATCHING EVERY MOVE I MADE, I KNEW THERE WAS GOING TO BE TROUBLE’... [50]
3. You have observed the marriage relationships of different people around you. You have definite ideas about the kind of relationship you would one day like to have with your marriage partner. Write about your ideas. The title of your Essay should be:
THE IDEAL MARRIAGE [50]
4. Write an Essay with the following title:
IMPORTANT THINGS ABOUT LIFE THAT I HAVE LEARNT. [50]
5. Write a story beginning with the words below. Provide it with a Title of your own.
‘I DID NOT REALISE HOW EASY IT WAS FOR SOMEONE TO BECOME ADDICTED’

SECTION B - INFORMAL WRITING

Answer only ONE Question (150 words) excluding the Address, Salutation, Ending)

1. At your school is a fellow pupil who is making a lot of money after school hours. As you really need money, you talk to this person about his success. Write your CONVERSATION/DIALOGUE. [20]
2. A friend of yours is the Presenter of A Youth Programme on Radio or Television. Write to Him/Her suggesting topics for Phone-in Programmes of shows. Give reasons for your suggestions. [20]
3. You have a very urgent and important matter that won't allow you to attend your friend's party. Because you do not want to hurt your friend's feelings, write a short letter to explain your absence and arrange to see him/her at some other time. [20]

SECONDARY SCHOOL**FINAL EXAMINATION 1999****GEOGRAPHY****MARKS: 240****GRADE: 11**

N.B. THIS QUESTION PAPER CONSISTS OF 3 SECTIONS VIZ.
CLIMATOLOGY, GEOMORPHOLOGY AND ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY.
EACH SECTION COUNTS 80 MARKS. YOU ARE REQUIRED TO
ANSWER ALL THREE SECTIONS.

SECTION A: CLIMATOLOGY.**Question 1**

Choose the correct answer from those given. Simply write down the letter of the correct answer:

- 1.1 The measurement pressure unit is:
 - a) Millimeter
 - b) Isobar
 - c) Hectopascals
 - d) Barometer
- 1.2 When atmospheric pressure readings are plotted on a synoptic weather map, they are represented by means of:
 - a) Isohyets
 - b) Isobars
 - c) Millibars
 - d) Maps
- 1.3 On South African synoptic weather maps contours of the ——— surface is used.
 - a) 1 500m
 - b) 1 012 hPa
 - c) 1 200
 - d) 850 hPa
- 1.4 The difference in atmospheric pressure is known as ———
 - a) Divergence
 - b) Pressure gradient
 - c) Geostrophic balance
 - d) Hydrostatic balance
- 1.5 The ——— force causes a change in the direction of all winds on the surface of the earth
 - a) Coriolis
 - b) Pressure gradient
 - c) Rotational
 - d) Air pressure
- 1.6 The following are examples of tertiary circulations except one. Which one is it?
 - a) Land and sea breezes
 - b) South African berg winds
 - c) Tropical cyclones
 - d) Chinook
- 1.7 Winds which result from the flow of cold air under the influence of gravity from higher to lower regions are often referred to as ——— winds.
 - a) Topographic
 - b) Valley
 - c) Winter
 - d) Katabatic

The wet adiabatic lapse rate is:

- a) 0,65°C per 100m
- b) 1°C per 100m
- c) 0,5°C per 100m
- d) 5°C per 100m

- 1.9 The temperature at which condensation takes place is the ——— temperature.
 - a) Maximum
 - b) Dew point
 - c) Minimum
 - d) High
- 1.10 The zone at which the two air masses i.e. the warm subtropical air and the cold polar air meet is the:
 - a) I.T.C.Z.
 - b) Occlusion
 - c) Polar Front
 - d) Mid-latitude
- 1.11 The mistral wind is an example of a ———.
 - a) Tertiary circulation
 - b) Land and sea breeze
 - c) Tropical cyclone
 - d) Depression
- 1.12 Monsoons have their origin in the temperature differences between:
 - a) Land and lower atmosphere
 - b) Land and sea
 - c) Mountains and lowlands
 - d) Sea and upper-atmosphere

[24]**QUESTION 2**

- 2.1 Explain what the following geographical terms mean;
 - a) Geostrophic wind
 - b) Front
 - c) Isobars
 - d) Pressure Gradient
 - e) Coriolis Force
- 2.2 Give a geographical term for each of the following;
 - A) The warm air and cold air meet and merge to form a single front.
 - B) A measurement unit for atmospheric pressure (which has replaced millibars).
 - C) An outflow of air.
 - D) The cooling of air at the rate of 1°C per 100m.
 - E) A low pressure system around which air rotates.
- 2.3 a) Name the three high pressure systems (belts) which largely influence South African climate.
 - B) Draw a well-labelled diagram to illustrate the formation and development of a mid-latitude cyclone.

(15)**OR**

- C) Draw a cross-section through a cold front.

(15)**QUESTION 3**

Study the synoptic weather map (940114) and answer the questions that follow:

- a) What pressure system exists at B?
 - b) F is a ——— front.
 - c) X represents a ——— (two words).
- Describe the weather changes that will occur at G. and D. when the cold front passes over.
- e) What feature is indicated by Y?
 - f) Describe the weather at Upington.

(2)**(2)****(2)****(6)****(2)****(6)****[20]**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

INTERIM CORE SYLLABUS

FOR

ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE

HIGHER, STANDARD AND LOWER GRADE

STANDARDS 8,9 AND 10

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: STANDARDS 8 AND 9: JANUARY 1995

STANDARD 10: JANUARY 1996

INSTRUCTIONAL OFFERING:

NAME	CODE
ENGLISH 2ND LANGUAGE	121172508
ENGLISH 2ND LANGUAGE	121272708
ENGLISH 2ND LANGUAGE	121372608
ENGLISH 2ND LANGUAGE	121172809
ENGLISH 2ND LANGUAGE	121273009
ENGLISH 2ND LANGUAGE	121372909
ENGLISH 2ND LANGUAGE	121173110
ENGLISH 2ND LANGUAGE	121273310
ENGLISH 2ND LANGUAGE	121373210

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME:

STANDARD	CODE
STANDARD 8 (HG)	608
STANDARD 8 (SG)	608
STANDARD 8 (LG)	608
STANDARD 9 (HG)	609
STANDARD 9 (SG)	609
STANDARD 9 (LG)	609
STANDARD 10 (HG)	610
STANDARD 10 (SG)	610
STANDARD 10 (LG)	610

S Y L L A B U S

1. PRINCIPLES

1.1 This syllabus is concerned with English as a means of communication in our multi-lingual society. Pupils whose mother tongue is not English may fall into one or more of the following groups:

- (a) those for whom English is a second language, because it is used frequently in their social environment
- (b) those for whom English is virtually a foreign language because they have very little contact with it in their daily life
- (c) those for whom English is a medium of instruction.

It is obvious, then, that pupils' needs and the strategies available to teachers may vary greatly from area to area.

1.2 Communicative language teaching uses the language skills which pupils already possess as the basis for further development. Consequently, teachers will need to assess with care what kinds of preparatory work their pupils will need in their learning of English as a second language. The focus should be on the pupil as learner: starting from where pupils are, rather than from an idealistic notion of where they ought to be.

1.3 The multilingual nature of South African society has led to variation in English vocabulary, syntax, accent, stress and intonation patterns. Such variations should be acknowledged in the teaching and assessment of English as a subject. Using language effectively (that is, language which is appropriate in terms of context, audience and purpose) should be valued more highly than the correct use of a single standard variety of the language.

1.4 The development of language and thinking skills are inextricably linked. It has been postulated that it is through the use of language that children take control of their thinking and create their own universe of understanding. Language, both the home language(s) and any additional language(s), therefore, has a fundamental role to play in the whole process of cognitive development. This role has to be acknowledged not only by the language teacher but also by all other teachers, irrespective of which subject/s they teach. The adoption of a language-across-the curriculum policy is of great benefit in this regard.

1.5 Language learning is a complex process, usually involving the interplay of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and sometimes of deliberate investigation of the structure of the language. In communicative language teaching, these four skills are integrated in purposeful activities, for example, pupils are asked to listen in order to speak or write; they are asked to speak in order to clarify and comprehend something heard or read, and so to respond to it in writing. Therefore, although this syllabus is detailed under various headings, it should be read as encouraging an appropriately integrated and interactive approach to language teaching. Every English lesson should, therefore, aim to involve the interplay of more than one skill in the performance of tasks required wherever this is possible.

2. GENERAL TEACHING APPROACH

The approach recommended in this syllabus is based on the principles informing communicative language teaching. The extent to which this approach is adopted will depend on the varied circumstances and target groups. However, the following features of communicative language teaching are offered as a general guide.

Teachers should create a climate within which pupils can use English with interest, purpose, and enjoyment. In addition, language should always be seen in relation to context: i.e. to purpose, audience, and circumstance.

Teachers should use the opportunities which come their way to foster their pupils' awareness of the many kinds of language and ways of using them, even though these may not be specified in the syllabus. Furthermore, they should encourage them to experiment across the range, correcting them only when their choice or use of language is inappropriate.

3. GENERAL AIMS

The purpose of this syllabus is to enable pupils to communicate successfully for personal, social, educational and occupational purposes. It aims, therefore,

- 3.1 to foster in pupils a desire to learn English, and to assist them to meet the challenge of living in a multilingual environment
- 3.2 to help pupils listen with accuracy, sensitivity and critical discrimination
- 3.3 to help pupils speak English clearly, fluently, with confidence and with sensitive awareness of audience in a variety of situations and for a variety of purposes
- 3.4 to guide pupils towards reading with increasing comprehension, enjoyment and discrimination.
- 3.5 to develop pupils' ability to write English appropriate to their purposes
- 3.6 to promote pupils' control of English through a knowledge of its structure and usage
- 3.7 to develop pupils' ability to process information in different ways, depending on the type of discourse and the context in which it occurs, with a view to improving their learning in all subjects across the curriculum

4. SPECIFIC AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

For convenience the language content which follows is listed under separate headings, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, teachers are encouraged at all times to design activities in which they work towards integrating as many of these skills as possible.

4.1 Listening

Listening skills cannot be developed in isolation. Rather, they should be developed in conjunction with the other skills, e.g. listening to what is being said, read or broadcast.

Throughout the junior secondary phase considerable stress should have been laid on an ability to understand the native speaker of English and to speak the language in such a way that communication is effective. These objectives should be developed even further in the senior secondary phase. Pupils' awareness of context and

SYLLABUS
FOR
ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE
STANDARD 7

A. PERSPECTIVES AND AIMS

1. Perspectives

This syllabus is concerned with English as a means of communication in our multi-lingual society. Pupils whose mother-tongue is not English may fall into one or more of the following groups:

- those for whom English is a second language, because it is used frequently in their social environment
- those for whom English is virtually a foreign language because they have very little contact with it in their daily life
- those for whom English is a medium of instruction.

It is obvious, then, that pupils' needs and the strategies available to teachers may vary greatly from area to area; but in all cases the English programme must witness to the usefulness of the language, making pupils aware of its importance for their personal, social and intellectual development.

Language learning is a complex process, usually involving the interplay of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and sometimes of deliberate investigation of the structure of the language. This syllabus is detailed under various heads, but it should be read as encouraging an appropriately integrated and interactive approach to language teaching.

2. Aims

As the over-riding aim of this syllabus is communicative competence for personal, social, educational and occupational purposes, it aims:

- 2.1 to foster a desire to learn English, and to assist pupils to meet the challenge of living in a multilingual environment
- 2.2 to help pupils listen with accuracy and critical discrimination
- 2.3 to help pupils speak acceptable English clearly, fluently and with confidence
- 2.4 to guide pupils towards reading with increasing comprehension and enjoyment
- 2.5 to develop pupils' ability to write English appropriate to their purposes
- 2.6 to promote pupils' control of English through a knowledge of its structure and usage.

B. POLICY AND OBJECTIVES

1. Teachers must create a climate within which pupils can use English with interest, purpose, and enjoyment.

However language is used, it should be seen in relation to context: i.e. to purpose, audience, and circumstance.

Teachers should use the opportunities which come their way to foster their pupils' awareness of the many kinds of language and ways of using them, even though these may not be specified in the syllabus. Furthermore, they should encourage them to experiment across the range, correcting them only when their choice or use of language is inappropriate.

It is only for convenience that the objectives which follow are listed under aural, oral, reading and writing. Teachers are encouraged to design activities in which they work towards realising several objectives, perhaps from different sections, at the same time.

2. English across the curriculum

Where pupils have English as a medium of instruction, it is highly desirable that schools should adopt an English across the curriculum policy. As one feature of this the English teacher should be invited to use material from other subjects in developing comprehension, note-taking and writing skills.

3. Remedial work

Persistent errors, arising in many cases from ignorance of English idiom, will be encountered in all classes. Special attention should be given to such errors. The teacher should make a note of all the mistakes which occur frequently in the oral and written work of his class, and should devise special exercises to correct them.

Remedial measures will achieve little or nothing, however, unless the language to which the pupil listens is acceptable and idiomatically correct, and it must therefore be the constant endeavour of the teacher whose mother-tongue is not English to improve his command of this language.

4. Adaptation of material

Although the syllabus has been drawn up to give as much guidance as possible, the teacher should remember that the pupils do not all grow up in the same environment. The work must therefore be constantly supplemented and modified by the teacher in order to adapt it to the pupils' needs. The examples given serve merely as an indication of what is intended. The syllabus lays down the minimum that should be accomplished, and bright pupils should not be held back and made to repeat old work if it is clear that they are capable of breaking new ground.

5. Allocation of periods

In order to make the best use of the time available it is suggested that the weekly English periods be allocated according to the following pattern:

Aural work (including listening comprehension and speech training)	1
Reading (prose and poetry) and comprehension	1 or 2
Language study	
Oral	1
Written exercises	1
General oral and written work	
Conversation	} 2 or 3
Oral preparation for written work	
Written work	

This basic pattern has been outlined in order to indicate the relative weighting of the main sections of the syllabus, but teachers should be flexible in their approach and are free to adjust the allocation to meet the particular needs of their pupils.

1. EXPOSITION OF SYLLABUS CONTENT

1. Aural (the listening skill)

Pupils must be exposed to a variety of listening activities which should include at least the following:

- 3.3.2 to see the function of:
- contents page
 - index
 - chapter and paragraph headings
 - indentation, italics and bold print
 - footnotes
- 3.3.3 to respond to the features which show that a writer is:
- introducing or developing an idea
 - emphasising a point
 - changing a line of thought
 - drawing a conclusion
- 3.3.4 to distinguish
- main points from supporting argument
 - statements from examples
- 3.3.5 to skim a text to get the gist of it
- 3.3.6 to scan a text to extract information on a particular topic
- 3.3.7 to distinguish between, and respond to, literal and figurative language, as it occurs in their normal reading
- 3.3.8 to recognise the differences in the demands made on them by the style and organisation of the texts they have to read (e.g. short stories, poems, advertisements, text books, cartoons, diagrams, application forms)
- 3.3.9 to follow and extend their individual interests by reading a variety of texts of their own choice.
4. Writing
- Oral and aural work and reading should form the basis of writing.
- Work dealt with in language study, reading, aural and oral work should be followed by regular written exercises.
- 4.1 The sentence
- 4.1.1 joining, extension and construction of sentences;
- 4.1.2 completion of sentences: supplying missing words, phrases and clauses;
- 4.1.3 continued use of substitution tables to construct a series of sentences of the same pattern.
- 4.2 Paragraphs and short passages
- 4.2.1 further work on arrangement of sentence in logical order to train pupils in the construction of a paragraph;
- 4.2.2 further practice in writing paragraphs;
- 4.2.3 the writing of short accounts, instructions, summaries, notices, telegrams and entries in diaries, integrated wherever possible with language work;
- 4.2.4 guided composition, including oral and written practice in the use of specific sentence patterns, structures, idiom and vocabulary;

- 4.2.5 the writing of short narratives and descriptions of at most 200 words.
- NB: Oral preparation must precede the writing of any essay.
- Topics should be carefully chosen to provide for a range of interests and abilities. Teachers should refrain from setting stereotyped, hackneyed topics, e.g. A journey by train, A picnic, A visit to the zoo.
 - By using suitable stimuli the teacher should encourage imaginative writing.
 - Due emphasis should be laid on clear and logical arrangement of facts as well as on style, including variation of sentence structure.
- 4.3 Letters: simple informal and formal letters, with emphasis on both form and content.
- Formal letters should be limited to orders, enquiries for information, and applications for employment.
 - Semi-formal letters (e.g. a letter of thanks to an employer) should be introduced at this stage.
- 4.4 Practice in completing forms, e.g. application forms, forms for depositing and withdrawing money, forms for opening a savings account.
- 4.5 Comprehension
- Comprehension exercises: the teaching and testing of comprehension should be based on sentences and passages of varying length (250 words maximum).
- 4.6 Spelling
- This must be taught orally and visually in context wherever possible, and tested in dictated sentences or passages, previously prepared. Care must be taken that the pupil knows the meanings of the words that he is taught to spell. These words should form part of the working vocabulary of the pupil at this stage.
- 4.7 Punctuation
- Continued attention must be given to punctuation so that pupils are able to punctuate skilfully and consistently in order to clarify meaning. Pupils should know how and for what purpose to use:
- the full stop
the comma
the colon
the semi-colon
quotation marks
the exclamation mark
the question mark
the apostrophe
brackets.
- The teaching of punctuation should be related to reading and language study lessons.
- NB: Pupils must be taught how to plan, draft, revise and polish their work.
- 4.8 Regular assignments should be set on the prescribed books.
- 4.9 Language structures and usage
- 4.9.1 Language must be studied as it is actually used in speech and writing; the teacher should not talk about English, but should teach his pupils to use English.

GENERAL REMARKS ON SYLLABUS

1. GENERAL

1.1 "The need, then, is not simply for more geography; it is for better geography, for geography relevant to the world of news headlines, world politics, international trade, the population explosion, and the other key issues of the real world".

(Harper, R. 1967)

1.2 "Many of the world's fundamental problems - the growth and distribution of world population; the adequacy of food supplies; the significance of spread of disease; industrialisation and standards of living, for example - are essentially geographical in character, and the geography teacher is in a unique position to help his pupils and the community".

(Cons and Honeybone, 1960)

2. SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

2.1 Methods

The close relationship between the stated aims of the syllabus and the teaching approaches should be stressed. To be really effective, teaching methods should:

- 2.1.1 always be focused on the immediate aim of the lesson;
- 2.1.2 take into account the nature of the subject matter presented;
- 2.1.3 be adjusted to the scholastic level of the pupils with particular reference to the needs of differentiated education;
- 2.1.4 stimulate and promote pupil participation, and contribute to the opening of wider horizons for the pupil;
- 2.1.5 be practically related to the pupils' experience of life wherever possible;
- 2.1.6 make provision of regular supervision of pupils' work.

2.2 The Teacher

The day of the "chalk and talk" teacher has passed and the emphasis, particularly in these syllabuses, is away from the memorisation of the large body of facts of earlier syllabuses towards the understanding of concepts based on a smaller number of ordered facts. The teacher becomes more the architect of meaningful learning situations with the ultimate goal of providing and managing most of the resources necessary for pupils to learn largely through their own initiative and efforts, but always under the guiding counsel of the teacher.

To be able to do justice to these syllabuses it is vital that teachers equip themselves properly in the academic sense. They are earnestly advised to consult the books of reference listed in the Departmental Book List, but more than that - to remain students and make it their dedicated task to keep themselves abreast of new developments in the subject. The Geography of the seventies cannot be taught with the Bachelor's Degree of the fifties.

3. SOME USEFUL ADDRESSES

3.1 Government Printer

Private Bag X85
PRETORIA

(For 1:50 000, 1:250 000 and 1:500 000 maps. Catalogue of all maps available at 10c per copy)

3.2 The Surveyor-General

Private Bag X291

(For vertical aerial photographs and mirror stereoscopes)

3.3 The Director of Statistics

Private Bag X44
PRETORIA

3.4 The Hydrographer

South African Navy
Maritime Headquarters
Youngsfield
P.O. KENYIN

CAPE

(For Nautical charts)

3.5 The Weather Bureau

Private Bag X193

PRETORIA

should be (For daily synoptic charts and other meteorological data)

to 3.6 The Assistant Director of Educational Tours

Dept. of Education and Training

Private Bag X212

PRETORIA

of 3.7 The Planetarium

and to JOHANNESBURG

C. EXPOSITION OF SYLLABUS CONTENT

(The figures in brackets indicate the approximate number of periods to be devoted to each section).

1. GENERAL GEOGRAPHICAL TECHNIQUES

Continuation of work done in Stds 6 and 7.

Whenever possible, the application of maps and aerial photographs should be integrated with relevant sections of the syllabus. Wellplanned and meaningful fieldwork should be undertaken whenever possible.

1.1 Reading and analysis of oblique and vertical (aerial) photographs.

1.1 (a) Difference between ordinary photographs and air photographs; difference between oblique and vertical photographs. (1)

(b) Methods by which air photographs are taken. (1)

(c) The vertical air photograph and its use. (1)

(d) The scale of air photographs (influence of relief on scale). (2)

1.1.2 (a) The comparison of features on the air photograph with the features on the corresponding South African 1:50 000 topographical map. (3)

(b) Recognition of features in air photographs with the aid of a stereoscope. (1)

The wonders of modern transport (or communications);

Population;

The Coffee Industry of Brazil and the R.S.A.

(6)

The above are merely examples. Teachers should give pupils a wide choice for the selection of topics which interest them.

(180)

EVALUATION

1. A year mark in Geography is arrived at by obtaining the total of at least eight class tests. (Each test, of 30 minutes duration, must count 50 marks). To this, add the marks attained for the assignment(s) and convert the gross total mark to count out of 100.

This mark is then combined with an examination mark of 200, giving a final mark of 300.

2. The examination paper (2 hours) will consist of the following:

2.1 A compulsory section of short objective questions 40 marks

2.2 A compulsory question on general geographical techniques, which will include map and/or photo interpretation 40 marks

2.3 Climatology

Two questions will be set. One question must be answered 30 marks

2.4 Geomorphology

Two questions will be set. One question must be answered. 30 marks

2.5 Population Geography

Two questions will be set. One question must be answered 30 marks

2.6 Regional Geography

Two questions, ONE of which must be answered, will be set on the developed countries (15 marks). Two questions, ONE of which must be answered, will be set on the developing countries (15 marks)

30 marks

Total

200 marks

Year Mark

100 marks

Grand Total

300 marks

KWAZULU-NATAL
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

INTERIM CORE SYLLABUS AND GUIDELINES FOR GEOGRAPHY (HG and SG) - 1996

CORE SYLLABUS STD 8 CODE 225117108	CONCEPTS AND GENERALISATIONS	SKILLS, PROCESSES, ATTITUDES, VALUES	OBJECTIVES: PUPILS SHOULD BE ABLE TO	SUGGESTED METHODS
2. CLIMATOLOGY				
2.1 The Atmosphere				
2.1.1 Composition	permanent gases, variable gases, solid particles	action research, awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explain the term atmosphere - state and describe the composition of the atmosphere 	Use transparencies, videos, diagrams, carry out experiments. Refer to local example, visit Weather Bureau.
2.1.2 Structure	troposphere, stratosphere, mesosphere, thermosphere	drawing, sketching, interpreting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - draw annotated diagrams to show the structure of the atmosphere 	
2.2 Temperature				
2.2.1 Heating of atmosphere	radiant energy, terrestrial radiation, absorption, reflection, scattering, conduction, convection	observing, recording, drawing, interpreting, map reading, evaluation, awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describe and explain the heating of the atmosphere 	
2.2.2 Factors influencing horizontal temperature gradient	horizontal temperature gradient		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explain factors influencing horizontal temperature gradient - evaluate the effect of temperature variations on economic activities. 	Use sketches, maps and diagrams, statistics, graphs
2.2.3 Factors influencing vertical temperature gradient	vertical temperature gradient, environmental lapse rate, temperature inversion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - state and explain factors influencing vertical temperature gradients. - evaluate the effect of temperature variations on economic activities. 	
2.3 MOISTURE IN THE ATMOSPHERE				
2.3.1 Relationship between temperature and moisture in the atmosphere; humidity	evaporation, water vapour, humidity, humiture, actual humidity, relative humidity	observing, recording, analysing, drawing, sketching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describe the relationship between temperature and moisture - distinguish between actual and relative humidity - evaluate the impact of humiture on people 	Use hygrometer/wet and dry bulb thermometer, use climatic data; Use slides, photographs, videos, use weather instruments, media, personal experience, use simplified synoptic weather maps.

CORE SYLLABUS STD 8 CODE 225117108	CONCEPTS AND GENERALISATIONS	SKILLS, PROCESSES, ATTITUDES, VALUES	OBJECTIVES: PUPILS SHOULD BE ABLE TO	SUGGESTED METHODS
2.4.2 Global Warming	terrestrial radiation, pollution dome, green house effect		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explain the concepts: green house effect and global warming - state and describe the causes of global warming - evaluate the impact of global warming on people, economic activities and ecosystems - state/suggest measures implemented to control global warming 	
2.4.3 Air Pollution	pollution, acid rain		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identify causes of air pollution - describe the impact of air pollution on people, natural ecosystems, farming, woodlands, 'man-made' structures - evaluate the significance of uncontrolled air pollution - state measures adopted/possible solution to the problem 	
3. GEOMORPHOLOGY				
3.1 Internal forces and resultant landforms				
3.1.1 Plate tectonics, earthquakes and vulcanism			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - distinguish between internal and external forces 	
Plate tectonics	crustal plates, mid-oceanic ridge, seafloor spreading, subduction zones, convection currents, constructive plate, destructive plate	analysing, interpreting, map reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explain the concept: plate tectonics - annotate maps showing crustal plates - explain plate tectonics as a possible cause of continental drift and earthquakes 	Use models, media, videos, simulations

WORK PROGRAMME

ENGLISH

STANDARDS 6 TO 10

1. INTRODUCTION

The modern English language textbook is by its very nature a detailed work programme covering the departmental syllabus. It remains for this work programme to provide a framework for the teacher to integrate the textbook of his choice with the prescribed networks. This serves as both a scheme of work and a record of work, but not as daily preparation.

2. HOW TO USE THIS WORK PROGRAMME

2.1 Planning for the year

The pages in this work programme should be filled in at the beginning of the year (tentatively, in pencil, if preferred) taking into account

- 2.1.1 the number of units in the textbook;
- 2.1.2 the school calendar of holidays, tests, exams and other interruptions (work on 32 teaching weeks); and
- 2.1.3 the teaching time required for each of the networks.

2.2 Planning a unit

- 2.2.1 Each page of the work programme represents one unit of the chosen textbook.
- 2.2.2 The available teaching time should be allocated according to the number of units in the textbook. For example, in a textbook with 16 units, each one will take 10 teaching days; in one with 19 units, each will take about eight days ($32 \div 19 = 1.7$ weeks), and so on.
- 2.2.3 Work should be done in its order in the textbook and not necessarily in the order of the headings in this work programme.
- 2.2.4 The date when each class completes the work should be entered in the record columns.

3. NOTES ON THE HEADINGS

- 3.1 Activities and exercises refers to the ideas in the textbook and includes listening, speaking, reading and writing in any of a variety of ways, both in class and for homework. References should be as specific and as detailed as space allows.
- 3.2 Comprehension refers to the passage for intensive reading which appears in nearly all units of a textbook, and includes all preparatory and follow-up work relating to it.

3.3 Language study usually means the basic language structure the unit focusses on, but may include other aspects of language study (vocabulary, remedial exercises, smaller points of grammar, and so on.)

3.4 Writing should be interpreted as widely as possible to include controlled, guided and free composition of every kind (essays, letters, reports, dialogues, cloze procedures, ...).

3.5 Oral work refers to lessons or parts of lessons designed to improve or test oral proficiency. (Lessons on pronunciation, stress, rhythm, intonation, for example, or dialogues, debates or dramatisations aimed at developing fluency or some other aspect of speaking.)

3.6 Literature refers specifically to the prescribed networks and all activities related directly to them.

3.7 Other material. The teacher is not restricted to the textbook and networks. This heading may be used for all work drawn from other sources, and for extensive reading.

3.8 The teacher may be in doubt where to enter an oral activity or a writing exercise when they arise out of a comprehension, language or literature exercise. In these cases he should be guided by the aim of the activity. In any case, entries should not be duplicated under different headings.

4. PLEASE NOTE:

4.1 The teacher can assume that the textbook covers the content of the syllabus and embodies an approach to second language teaching compatible with the syllabus and the Departmental English subject policy. This does not relieve the teacher of the need to have copies of these documents and to understand their contents, however.

4.2 It is more important to deal with every unit (in greater or lesser detail depending on the work rate of the class) than to work through every detail but not reach the end of the textbook.

4.3 Extensive reading should be added to the work covered by this work programme.

4.4 Oral assessment should be done through a reader-speaker system (see the subject policy).

5. Title of the textbook used: _____

Titles of networks: 5.1 _____

5.2 _____

5.3 _____

ENGLISH

STANDARD 7

1. The Scheme

- 1.1 The scheme of work is divided into 16 fortnightly units covering a total of 32 weeks of actual teaching time.
- 1.2 The first unit has been set out in detail to establish the basic pattern. Each of the subsequent units must follow the same pattern regarding the division of periods and the approach to be followed.
- 1.3 Each unit will deal with a basic language structure or component and will include a variety of other aspects of language. (See addenda A and B). Teachers must refer to the textbook being used and ensure that appropriate exercises and drills are included in the various units. Specific references to the actual exercises or chapters in the textbook used should be entered in the scheme and/or preparation.
- 1.4 An integrated approach must form the basis of all the work included in a unit.

2. Literature Study (Reading)

- 2.1 The emphasis must be on the change from reading aloud to silent reading, and from the progressive development of mechanical reading ability to rapid comprehension. Pupils must be prepared for the discovery of knowledge and the enrichment of leisure.
- 2.2 The teacher must ensure that a diversity of suitable material, including books and magazines relating to other school subjects, is available.
- 2.3 The study of the prescribed books should be programmed in such a way that the actual reading of the book(s) will have been completed by the end of unit 14.
- 2.4 No attempt should be made to read the whole of the books prescribed in class. Most of the reading will be done by pupils at home. Suitable passages in these books must be used for practice in reading aloud, listening comprehension, controlled silent reading, intensive reading and comprehension testing.
- 2.5 Written work based on the prescribed book(s) must be done at least once every three weeks.
- 2.6 When the study of a new book or poem is to be commenced, a suitable introduction should be planned to enable pupils to understand and appreciate the work they are about to tackle.

3. Remedial work

Constant attention must be given to common errors as revealed by pupils in their oral and written work, e.g.
 Misuse of tenses;
 Incorrect grammatical use of the language;
 Misunderstanding and misuse of common idiomatic expressions;
 Lack of vocabulary appropriate for specific situations and topics;
 Interference of the mother tongue;
 Incorrect spelling and punctuation.

4. Written work/Homework

- 4.1 Oral work should occupy at least 75% of teaching time in every period.
- 4.2 Written work should be based on the oral work done in class and is best done as homework. The teacher should always bear in mind that frequent, short exercises are most effective and teach pupils to work on their own and to think independently.
- 4.3 At least 10 - 15 minutes written homework should be expected after each period. The time allocated to reading and the study of literature should increase from 30 minutes in Standard 6 to at least an hour per week in Standard 8. The following numbers of hours homework per week should be regarded as the absolute minimum:
 Standard 6 - 1½ hours.
 Standard 7 - 2 hours.
 Standard 8 - 2½ hours.
- 4.4 Marking of written work must be done regularly. Straight-forward language exercises can often be marked by pupils themselves under the guidance of the teacher. Paragraphs, accounts, reports, narratives, descriptions, letters, etc. should be marked selectively.

5. Test and Examinations

- 5.1 Tests are devised to determine whether pupils have mastered the work that has been done over a certain period. A test, therefore, may concentrate on only one aspect of the work. On the other hand the examination must be so planned that all aspects are covered.
- 5.2 In each unit at least one aspect of the work should be tested, i.e. at least 16 tests in the course of the year. Care must be taken that as many as possible of the different sections of the syllabus are tested.
- 5.3 If the work has been tested conscientiously, only two full-scale internal examinations are necessary per year. In the Standard 8 year the second examination should take place in September.

Period 11

Oral Composition

- (a) Oral class discussions based on the central theme of the passage studied in Period 1 and on literature study. The aim is to consolidate the work done throughout the unit. Therefore the emphasis is on the use of words, phrases, expressions and language structures dealt with in the preceding 10 lessons.
- (b) The oral discussions should also serve as preparation for the written composition period.
- (c) Oral discussions should vary and must include short prepared and impromptu speeches, dialogues, dramatization, language games, etc.

Period 12

Written Composition

- (a) Written compositions must be seen as the culmination of the work done throughout the unit and must include the following:
 - (i) Joining, extension, construction and completion of sentences;
 - (ii) Arranging of sentences in logical order to construct paragraphs;
 - (iii) Paragraph writing;
 - (iv) Short accounts, reports, instructions, summaries and notices;
 - (v) Guided composition;
 - (vi) Short narratives and descriptions;
 - (vii) Simple formal and informal letters;
 - (viii) Telegrams;
 - (ix) Practice in completing forms.
- (b) Although most of the writing will be done as homework, pupils should frequently be allowed to do such written exercises in the classroom. This affords the teacher an opportunity for individual attention.
- (c) Keep a record of common errors for use when planning remedial exercises. The rewriting by pupils of long lists of "corrections" serves very little purpose. Rather concentrate on individual and class problems and use these as basis for shorter, carefully framed remedial exercises.

ADDENDUM A

The following are the main language components on which the work in the different units must be based:

STANDARD 7

UNIT	LANGUAGE COMPONENT
1	The Present Indefinite tense.
2	The Past Indefinite tense.
3	The Future Indefinite tense.
4	Revision.
5	The Present and Past continuous tenses.

UNIT	LANGUAGE COMPONENT
6	The Present perfect tense.
7	Direct and Indirect speech.
8	Revision.
9	Auxiliaries.
10	Past and Future perfect tenses.
11	Passives.
12	Revision.
13	Adjectives, Adjective phrases, Adverbs and Adverbial phrases.
14	Conjunctions and Sequence of tenses.
15	Pronouns.
16	Revision.

ADDENDUM B

1. The language components listed in addendum A require not only detailed attention in a specific unit, but also recurring attention throughout the year since an integrated approach is essential. Remedial work often embraces more than one of these components.
2. The items listed below should frequently form part of specific lessons as set out in the model unit. Whenever an item is included in such a lesson the number of the period should be recorded in the column for that particular unit. This will provide a detailed and accurate record of the actual work done in the classroom situation.

Example

ITEM	UNIT															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Pronouns	2				3				7			2			9	
Idioms			3			6				2						5
Antonyms	2			7			9			2						5
Proverbs		5		7									9			

Note that more than one item may be dealt with in a particular lesson.
N.B.: Consult the relevant section(s) in the syllabus.

Appendix 22: Criteria for Effective Argument

Purpose: To persuade someone that a judgement is correct.

Genre

- Is there a clear **thesis statement** that interprets the topic, sets boundaries for the topic and allows the reader to predict what is to follow?
- Does the writer use the optional move, **background information**, to lead readers into the topic?
- Is each **claim** in support of the thesis clearly stated at the beginning of each paragraph and is it clearly linked to the thesis statement?
- Is each claim supported by relevant **evidence** or **explanation**?
- Does the **conclusion** sum up the argument and relate it to the thesis statement?

Tenor:

- Does the writer create an objective, impersonal relationship with the reader by using the following linguistic devices:
 - nominalisation
 - impersonal and general reference
 - lexical choices which avoid expression of attitudes
 - careful use of modality to express appropriate degrees of certainty and obligation
- Does the writer use the declarative mood appropriately?
- Does the writer use third person and general reference to create objectivity?

Field:

- Does the writer use language which extends, enhances and elaborates on the information.
- Does the writer use linking devices that show reasons and conditions?
- Establish reasoning relationships with means other than conjunctions such as *verbs, nouns, and prepositional phrases*?
- Does the writer use appropriate technical and academic vocabulary (*Information Reports, Historical Recounts, Hortatory Exposition, Analytical Exposition*)?
- Does the writer use the present tense consistently where appropriate (*The purpose of information reports is to describe a whole class of things; Knowledge of genres is important for a number of reasons...*)?

Mode:

- Has the writer created a context-independent text for the argument by:
 - use of text (*thesis*), paragraph (*controlling idea*) and clause **themes** consistent with the purpose of the text?
 - creating the theme of one clause from the rheme of the previous one?
 - use of linking devices such as logical connectors (textual themes)?
 - use of reference items such as *this, those, they, the* etc?
 - use of repetition and synonymy?